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Bill Keeler and the Lawyer, see p. 145.

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WIT BOUGHT;

OR,

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

ROBERT MERRY.

BY

PETER PARLEY.

NEW-YORK:
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No. 115 Nassau Street.
1859.

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CHAPTER I.

MY PARENTS' DEATH—FIRST JOURNEY—MY UNCLE'S HOUSE—THE SCHOOL.

I WAS born in the city of New York, in the year 1790. My parents were both English people. At first, they were in poor circumstances, but my father became a merchant, and acquired some property. He died

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CHAP. VIII. Emigration
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—Disappoin
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idst of success; and in a ards I lost my mother. I orphan, at the age of five rty worth about two thou-

had a brother living in the Salem, situated upon the r of the State of New York. inn which went by the name of and Bull;" and, as it was upon oad between Boston and New York, he had a good situation and a thriving business.

To the care of this uncle I was committed by my mother's will, and immediately after her death I was taken to my uncle's residence. I had never been out of the city of New York, and had never seen the country. I had supposed the world one great city, and never fancied that there were hills, and forests, and rivers, and fields without any houses. I still remember my journey from New York to Salem very well. I remember that the sight of so many new things, put all grief for the loss of my father and my mother out of my mind. I was delighted at everything I

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met, and particularly remember some lambs that I saw playing on a hill-side. They were scampering about, jumping from rock to rock, and chasing each other at full speed. I had never seen a lamb before, and I thought these the prettiest creatures that were ever created. I have since seen lions and tigers, and many other strange creatures; but I have never met with any animal, that excited in me half the interest that I felt when I saw those little lambs.

After two days' journey we arrived at my uncle's house. It was an old-fashioned building, painted red, with a large sign swinging in front, upon one side of which was the picture of a stout barn-yard cock, and on the other side was the head of a bull.

I soon became acquainted with the family,

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and in a few weeks was quite familiar with the main street and all the bye lanes in the village. My uncle had no children, but there was living with him a boy about ten years old, of the name of Bill Keeler. He became my principal companion, and, being a very knowing sort of lad, gave me an insight into many things.

After I had been at my uncle's about six months, it was concluded to send me to school. I was now seven years of age, but, strange as it may seem to boys and girls of the present day, I did not know my letters, and, what is less remarkable, I had a great dislike to going to school.

The schoolhouse was situated in a large space, where four roads met. It was a bleak and desolate hill-side, partly covered with heaps of stones, thrown out of the path, or gathered from the neighbouring fields. There were a few groups of tangled briers and

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stunted bushes amid these heaps of stones. On the lower side of the hill, there was a fine old oak growing out of a heap of splintered rocks, at the foot of which there bubbled forth a small stream of pure water. This

fountain went by the pretty name of "Silver Spring."

Bill Keeler led me into the school, which was then kept by Mrs. St. John. She looked at me through her spectacles, and over her spectacles, and then patted me on

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the head, told me I was a good boy, and sent me to a seat. In about an hour I was called up, the spelling-book opened, and the alphabet being placed before me, the mistress pointed to the first letter, and asked me what it was.

I looked at the letter very carefully, and then gazed in the face of Mrs. St. John, but said nothing. "What is that?" said she, peremptorily, still pointing to the first letter of the alphabet. Now I had not been used to be scolded, and therefore felt a little angry at the manner in which the schoolmistress addressed me. Beside, at that moment I saw Bill Keeler at the other end of the room, looking at me with a saucy twinkle in his eye, which made me still more angry.

"What is that?" again said the schoolmistress, still more sharply than before. It was time for me to do something.—"I will not tell you!" said I. "Why not?" said the schoolmistress, greatly amazed at my conduct. "Because I did not come here to teach you your letters; but I came here to learn them."

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The school-mistress shut up her book. Bill Keeler rolled up his eyes, and made his mouth into a round O. "Go to your seat!" said the school-mistress. I turned to go. "Stop!" said the school-mistress, giving me a slap on the side of the head; at the same moment she opened the book, and again presented the alphabet to my view. "Look,

there!" said she, pointing with her finger to the top letter; "do you see that?" I answered, "Yes." "Well, that is A," said she. "That is A?" said I, doubtingly. "Yes," said the mistress sharply. "I do not believe it!" said I. "Why do you not believe it?" said she. "Because I never heard of it before," I replied. "Go to your

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seat!" said the school-mistress; and away I went.

Such was my first day's schooling. In the evening, Mrs. St. John called upon my uncle, and told him I was the most stupid boy she ever saw, and very ill-mannered beside, and she hoped that I should not come again to her school. My uncle was greatly offended, not with me, but with the school-mistress. He declared I should not go near her again; and, for more than a year, I was permitted to amuse myself in my own way.

I was greatly pleased with all this at the time, but I have since often thought how severely I was punished for my ill behaviour at school. I was left to run about in idleness, getting bad habits, and losing the precious time that should have been devoted to the acquisition of knowledge. Thus it always happens, that, soon or late, we are made to suffer for our misconduct.

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CHAPTER II.

BILL KEELER—THE FOX-TRAP AND MRS. ST. JOHN—HUNTING EXCURSION.

THE little town of Salem was situated at the foot of a mountain, consisting of wild and broken ridges, forming the boundary between the states of New York and Connecticut. Being now almost entirely at liberty, I spent a great part of my time in rambling over the mountains. In these excursions, Bill Keeler was my frequent companion. My uncle, disposed to humour me in everything, allowed me to dispose of my time as I chose.

Bill was, in general, very good-natured. He was ingenious in making whistles, and setting snares and traps for quails, partridges, and rabbits. He was also an expert fisherman, and had a knack of putting the hook and line into the water in such an insinuating manner, that he always caught more and

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larger fish than any one else. He was a dexterous swimmer, formed the best flying kites in the village, and made bows and arrows to perfection.

All these various accomplishments rendered Bill Keeler a delightful companion to

me, who, having been brought up in the city, had but little acquaintance with these arts.

But although Bill was thus clever, he was so restless and enterprising, as always to be in some scrape or other. One day, he had

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seen the burrow of a woodchuck, which is a kind of American marmot, in a field behind the house of Mrs. St. John. So he took a large fox-trap, and sunk it to the level of the ground, in the very path where the woodchuck was accustomed to go. He then sprinkled it over with earth, so as to make it appear as if no trap were there. Next morn-

ing, pretty early, Bill went to see his trap, expecting of course to find that he had caught the woodchuck. But what was his dismay, on approaching the place, to find Mrs. St. John herself, screaming with all her might, and throwing up her hands in despair! Bill went near enough to see that she had one foot fast in the trap. He then

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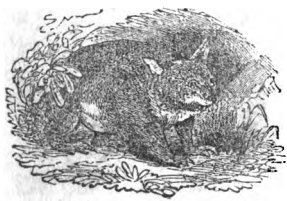
turned about, and left the poor school-mistress to be extricated by her neighbours. For this Bill got a sound flogging from my uncle, but he felt well compensated by being released from school for a month; for, during that period, the poor woman was too lame to resume her duties.

Bill's next exploit was equally serious. If there was anything on earth that he loved better than another, it was gunpowder.



Why he had such a fancy for it, I cannot tell, unless because it was a noisy, tearing, dangerous thing, like himself. But be this as it may, he spent more than half the little money he could get in buying it. Every day he was firing off some old pistol-barrel, rammed full of powder; or he was trying to split a log of wood with it, by filling some knot-hole, and exploding it. But his greatest delight was to sport with my uncle's old gun.

Well, one afternoon he got the gun, and

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he and I went among the mountains to hunt for something. Pretty soon we saw a squirrel, but Bill was so intent on killing a bear, a raccoon, or some large animal, that he scorned to shoot a squirrel. As we went on, we met with various kinds of small game, but none worthy of the attention of my heroic friend.

It was now evening, and we were at a considerable distance from home. We walked along as fast as we could, and Bill, who was never out of spirits, beguiled the time by telling what he would have done, if something had fallen in his way. "If a wolf had come along in the woods," said Bill, drawing up the old piece, and taking aim at an old stump, "and if he had come near enough, how I would have peppered him!"

Just at that instant we heard a rustling sound in a meadow that we were passing. It was too dark to see distinctly, but Bill peeped through the fence, and saying to me

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in an emphatic whisper, "Be still; I see one!" he cocked the gun and brought the heavy old piece to a level with his eye. After a long, portentous aim, during which I winked so hard as nearly to put my eyes out —bang! it went, and Bill was stretched backward upon the grass in an instant, by

the kicking of the gun! He very soon got up, however, and jumped over the fence to pick up his game. He was gone but a minute, and when he came back he only said, "Well, I peppered him!" "Peppered what?" said I. "No matter," said he, and that was all I could get out of him. But the next morning one of neighbour Kellogg's cows was found in a thicket, shot through the head, and dead as a hatchet.

Bill was obliged to confess, and my uncle settled the affair by paying the value of the cow.

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CHAPTER III.

MY NEW GUN—A STRANGE CHARACTER—ADVENTURES ON THE MOUNTAINS.

WHILE I was living under the indulgent care of my uncle, I thought it very pleasant to be permitted to have my own way; but I have since been led to believe that most of the serious evils of my life have flowed from this circumstance. We ought to be brought up to follow duty rather than pleasure, or, to speak more properly, to find our pleasure in doing our duty. If parents send their children to school, it is the duty of their children not only to go, but to improve all the advantages offered them.

Through the false kindness of my uncle I grew up headstrong and passionate, though my temper was naturally good. I could not bear anything that thwarted my wishes. I was easily offended, and became selfish, un-

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reasonable, and unjust, in proportion as I was petted and flattered.

Five or six years from my arrival at Salem thus passed on. I am now going to relate some circumstances, which will show not only how much my temper had been injured but into what evils a thoughtless and headstrong youth will rush, if given up to his own guidance.

On a certain day in January, it had been agreed between Bill Keeler and myself, that we would proceed to the mountain for the purpose of hunting. My uncle had bought me a new fowling-piece. I looked forward to the day with great impatience, and when at last it arrived, Bill and myself were up by daybreak, ready to depart. The winter had thus far been remarkably mild and open. There was as yet no snow on the ground.

But when we were about to leave the house on our expedition, my uncle, who had been out of doors, told us that it was going to snow, and it would be better not to venture to go up the mountain. I was annoyed by this advice, and told my uncle that I would go, whether he thought it best or not. With

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more than ordinary spirit, he replied that I should not go! This resistance put me in a rage. I seized my gun, uttered some words of defiance, and rushed out of the house. Finding me thus determined and incorrigible, my yielding uncle told Bill, who

stood still all the time, seeming to know now it would turn out, to go with me, and take good care of me.

We soon reached the forests that lay at the foot of the mountain, and while it was yet somewhat dark, we began to ascend. As we were passing through a small copse of tall trees without underwood, I heard the step of something near, and immediately dis-

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covered a dark object passing slowly on before me. I drew up my piece, and was on the point of firing, when Bill struck down the barrel of my gun, and exclaimed, "Stop, stop, do not fire!—it is old Sarah!" This was said and done in time to prevent my shooting the object at which I aimed, but not to stop the discharge of my firelock. The shot struck the ground at the very feet of my companion.

The noise of my gun aroused the attention of the singular old woman, whom, with the ardour of a youthful hunter, I had taken for a wild cat or a wolf. She turned round, and began to speak in a warning voice. "Go back!" said she, at the pitch of her lungs, "go back! for the snow is already falling, and you will both get lost in the woods. In one hour the paths will be covered, and then you will not find your way among the mountains!"

Bill and I laughed at this, and I am sorry to say that we returned the kind anxiety of the old woman for our safety, with jeers and gibes. "Take care of yourself, and we will take care of ourselves," said I. "Keep your

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breath to cool your porridge" said Bill. With this and similar impertinence we passed up the acclivity, leaving the decrepit old woman to get on as she might.

I had seen this personage before, and had heard something of her story; but I was now curious to know more. Accordingly, I asked Bill about her, and he proceeded to tell me

all that was known of her character and history. She was a native of Long Island, and during the war of the Revolution had become attached to a foreign officer, who was stationed there. He cruelly neglected and deserted her. With a mind somewhat bewildered, she wandered into the country,

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and took up her abode in a cave on the very mountain we were now ascending. Here she had lived for years, visiting the villages in the vicinity in the summer season, but retiring to her den and subsisting on nuts and roots during the winter. Many wild stories were told of her. It was said that she had lived so long in the mountain, that the foxes had become familiar with her, and would come and lick her hands. It was said the crows would sit on her head, and the rattle-snakes coil in her lap. Beside all these tales, it was added that "Old Sarah," as she was called, was a witch, and many persons declared that they had seen her just at dark, or before a thunder-storm, flying through the air on a broomstick.

Bill's narrative was cut short by the sudden rising of a partridge from a bush just before me. Another and another soon followed. These creatures, which are a kind of grouse, though we in America call them partridges, are very cunning. They are always on the watch, and when they hear or see any one coming, they run to the opposite side of some rock, or thicket, or tree, and

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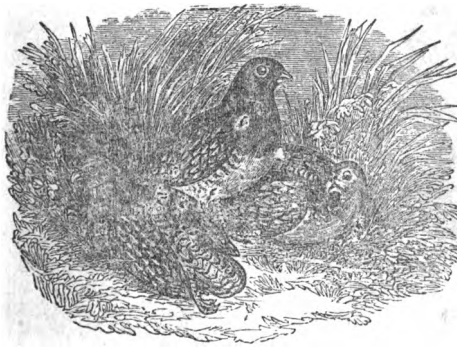
remain concealed till the person comes near. They then burst away with a startling, rushing sound, taking care to keep the rock, or tree, or thicket between them and their enemy, until they are at a distance.

At least a dozen of these birds broke from their cover, but neither Bill nor myself had



a chance for a shot. So we went on, greatly excited, however, by the game we had seen. It was not long before we met with another covey of partridges, and firing at random, I killed one of them. Great was my exultation, for I had never killed a partridge before; and, beside, I had shot it with my new

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gun; and, more than all, Bill, who was expert at every kind of sport, had as yet met with no success. As I picked up the bird, still fluttering in my hand, and held it out to my companion, I imagine that I felt of as much consequence as Bonaparte did, when he had conquered the Germans in the field of Austerlitz.

Excited by this triumph of skill and my new gun, we continued to push forward, though it was now snowing fast; and the ground was already covered to the depth of two or three inches. Frequently meeting with some kind of game, though we got little of it, we traversed one ridge after another, until we were involved in a sea of small and thickly wooded ridges and ravines, that

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crowned the top of the mountain. Scarcely heeding the course we took, or thinking of return, we proceeded for several hours. At last we came to a small hill, and it was agreed between Bill and myself that he should take the valley on one side, and I on the other, and that we should meet beyond it.

I had not gone far before a rabbit ran by me, and entered a thicket at a little distance.

I followed it, but it plunged further into the bushes. I pursued it from place to place, from thicket to thicket, but without being able to get a shot at it. At last I was obliged to give up the pursuit in despair, and I set out to join my companion.

So intent had I been upon my object, that I had not marked my route nor noticed the lapse of time. But as soon as I began to think

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of joining my companion, I became conscious that I had gone a considerable distance out of my way, and had spent a long time in the chase of the rabbit. I therefore proceeded with as much rapidity as the rugged nature of the ground and the dense forest would allow, and, as I supposed, in the direction of the extremity of the ridge where Bill and I were to meet.

It was not long, however, before I became assured that I had lost my way—and that, instead of approaching the point intended, I had wandered a great way from it. I now began to retrace my steps, and for a time was guided by my tracks in the snow. But the storm had come on in earnest. The large flakes fell thick and fast, filling the air with a dense cloud, and seeming to pour down upon the earth as if shovelled from some reservoir in the skies. In a few minutes after I had passed, my tracks were completely covered up, and no trace of them could be seen.

My situation was now serious, and I began to consider what was to be done. The advice of my uncle came to my mind, and the warning of the old woman. I fired my gun,

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hoping that Bill would hear it, and waited in breathless anxiety for a reply But I only heard the wind roaring in the tops of the tall trees, and neither the mountain nor the tempest seemed to heed my distress.

I was never in my life so struck with my utter helplessness. At first I gave way to despair. I threw my gun on the ground, and lay down myself, and with bitter lamentations bewailed my fate. But the gray, gnarled old trees and sturdy rocks around took not the slightest notice of my distress. I fancied that I could almost see them smile at my vain wailings. They did not, at any rate, rush to my relief, or soothe my agony. For once, I was obliged to rely upon myself; and it was a stern lesson, which I have never forgotten.

After a few moments, I rose from the ground, brushed off the snow from my clothes, and began seriously to devise some plan of action. But little accustomed to think or act for myself in an emergency, I was a poor hand at contrivance. My convenient friend, Bill Keeler, had been accustomed to save me the trouble of making any mental or bodily exertion. O how ardently

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did I now wish that he were with me! I again called out his name, but all around me was voiceless; for even the throat of the mountain, that had been so ready with its echoes, was now choked up with the thickening snow. Nothing could be heard but the one deafening roar of the gale, chafing the uneasy tops of the trees.

I set out in what seemed to me the direction of my home, and proceeded with considerable rapidity for a time, but the snow was now a foot in depth, and as it impeded my progress, so it diminished my strength. I was, at length, obliged to slacken my pace, and finally, being completely wearied out, I sat down beneath the branches of a large tree, to rest myself. This spot was so sheltered by the thickly woven branches as to be free from snow, and here I continued for some time. When I got up to proceed, I found my limbs so stiff that it was difficult for me to move. At the same time a dizziness came over me, and I fell to the ground.

It was not till the next day that I had any consciousness of existence. When I awoke, I was in a dark, rocky cavern, with an old

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woman by my side. At first, I fancied it all to be some strange dream, and expected to awake and find myself in my comfortable bed at my uncle's. But pretty soon the recollection of the preceding day came back, and guessing at the truth, I asked—"Is that you, Sarah?" "It is," said the old woman; "and you are in my cave." "And you have saved my life, then?" said I, half rising from my recumbent position. "Yes—yes," said she; "I found you beneath a tree, and I brought you here. But you must be quiet, for you need care and rest."

I thanked the poor old hermitess, and begged her pardon for my impertinence on the preceding morning. I then began to inquire about the depth of the snow, and whether she had seen anything of my companion. She told me that there was at least four feet of snow on the ground, and that it was therefore impossible to leave the cave; that Bill Keeler, being an expert woodsman, had no doubt found his way home; and that in all probability I was given up by my friends as lost.

Here I was, in a cave, and my only companion was a withered old dame, her long

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hair almost as white as the snow-drift, her form bent, her eyes bleared, her face brown and wrinkled. Beside all this, she was esteemed a witch, and while feared and shunned by mankind, she was regarded as the familiar companion of the wild fox and the rattlesnake.

Nor was this all that rendered my situation singular. There was no fire in the place in which I was, yet, strange to say, I did not suffer from the cold. Nor were there any articles of furniture. The only food that was given to me consisted of roots and walnuts, with a little dried beef and bread which Old Sarah had brought from the village.

For two days and two nights I remained at this place, the greater part of the time lying upon the bottom of the cave on my back, with only a ray of light admitted through the cleft of the rock, which served as a door, and which was partially closed by two large pieces of bark. On the third day I was looking from the mouth of the cave upon the scene around, when I saw a figure at a considerable distance, attempting to make its way through the snow, in the direction of

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the cave. In a moment after I knew it to be Bill Keeler. I clambered to the top of a rock, and shouted with all my might.

And my shout was soon answered by Bill's well-known voice. It was a happy moment for us both. In a few minutes we were together, and both burst into tears.

I was deeply affected, and old Sarah's eyes, that had seemed dry with the scorching of sorrow and time, were now overflowing. When I noticed her sympathy, however, she shrunk away, and retired to her cave. Bill then related all that had happened; how he hunted for me on the mountain till midnight, and then, with a broken heart, went home for help; and how he had since toiled for my discovery and deliverance.

My uncle soon arrived, with sufficient assistance to take me home, though the depth of the snow rendered it exceedingly difficult

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to proceed. I left old Sarah with abundant thanks, and an offer of money, which, however, she steadily refused. At last I reached home. Not a word was said to remind me of my obstinacy and folly, in going upon a sporting expedition, against counsel and advice; nothing but rejoicing at my return was heard or seen. My uncle invited the

neighbours in the evening; there was hot flip in abundance, and ginger and cider for those who liked it. Tom Crotchet, the fiddler, was called, young and old went to dancing, and the merriest night that ever was known was that in which young Bob Merry, who had been lost on the mountain, was found, having

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been two days and two nights in the cave of "Old Sarah the hermitess."

I could not share in this mirth; I felt too sober and solemn for hilarity. The whole adventure had sunk deep into my mind, though I did not immediately understand its full effect upon my character. I had been made in some degree aware of that weakness which springs from being always dependent upon others; and a wholesome lesson had been taught me, in finding my life saved by an old woman, whom a few hours before I had treated with rudeness, impertinence, and scorn. I could not but feel humbled, by discovering that she had more generous motives of action, a loftier and more noble soul, than I with all my advantages.

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CHAPTER IV.

MY UNCLE'S INFLUENCE—FORTY YEARS AGO—THE TAVERN—THE HOLIDAY.

When I was fifteen years of age I had made little progress in education. I could indeed read and write, and I knew something of arithmetic, but my advance beyond this was inconsiderable. I will tell you the reason of this.

In the first place, my uncle had no very high estimation of what he called *larnin;* he was himself a man of action, and believed that books render people dull and stupid, rather than efficient in the business of life.

He kept the village inn, which in those days of rum and punch was an institution of great power and authority. It was common, at the period of which I speak, for the Church and inn to stand side by side in the towns; and if one day in the week sobriety and temperance were preached in the former, hard

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drinking and licentiousness were deeply practised in the latter during the other six. The tavern, therefore, not only counteracted the good effect of the preacher, but it went farther, and in many cases corrupted the whole mass of the society of the place.

In such a state of society as this, the innkeeper was usually the most influential man in the village. Now to do my uncle justice, he was a generous, honest, and frank-hearted man. His full, ruddy countenance bespoke all this. The inn was freely and generously kept: it was supplied with every luxury and comfort common in those days.

The proprietor of such an establishment

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was necessarily at that time a man of influence; and the free manners and habits of my uncle tended to increase the power that his position gave him. He drank liberally himself, and vindicated his practice by saying that good liquor was one of the gifts of Providence, and it was no sin—indeed it was rather a duty—to indulge freely in the gifts of Providence.

As I have said, my uncle was opposed to education, and as he grew older and drank more deeply, his prejudice against it seemed to increase. He was equally opposed to religion, and spoke disrespectfully of the minister and the church.

Now as he was a kind-hearted, generous man, how could he be so narrow-minded in respect to education and religion? The answer to this question is easy. He was addicted to the free use of liquors, which not only tend to destroy the body, but to ruin and debase the mind.

I have been particular about this part of my story, for I wished to show the natural influence of the habits of my uncle, and their operation upon my own fortunes. I shall

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hereafter have yet a sadder story to tell, as to the effect of the village tavern. For the present, I only point out the fact, that a man who encourages intemperance is usually unfriendly to the education and improvement of mankind; that his position tends to make him fear the effect of light and wish for darkness; and that hard drinking will ruin even a generous and noble mind and heart.

But to return to the school. I have already described the situation of the house. The building itself was of wood, about fifteen feet square, plastered within, the benches were without backs, and constructed by thrusting sticks, for legs, through auger holes in a plank. On one side, against the wall, was a long table, serving as a desk for the writers.

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In summer, the school was kept by the woman I have mentioned, who charged the town a dollar a week, boarding herself; in winter it was kept by a man, who was paid five dollars a month and found in board and lodging. Here about seventy children, of all sizes, were assembled during this latter portion of the year; the place and manner of treatment being arranged as much as possible on the principle that a schoolhouse is a penitentiary, where the more suffering there is, the more the improvement will be.

The books in use were Webster's Spelling Book, Dilworth's Arithmetic, Webster's Second and Third Part, the New Testament, and Dwight's Geography. These were all; and the best scholars of the seminary never penetrated more than half through this mass of science. There was no such thing as a history, a grammar, or a map in the school.

Such was the state of things—such the condition of the town school, where I received my education, the only education that I ever enjoyed, except such as I have since found in study by myself, amidst the active pursuits of life. But let me not blame

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the school; I was myself in fault, for even the poor advantages afforded me there, I wilfully neglected; partly because I was fond of amusing myself and impatient of application; partly because I thought myself worth two thousand pounds, and fancied that I was above the necessity of instruction; and partly because my uncle and his bar-room friends were always sneering at men of education, and praising "men of spirit and action"—those who could drive a stage skilfully, or beat in pitching halfpence, or bear off the palm in a wrestling-match.

At the period at which my last chapter closed, I was full of health, animation, and hope.

Saturday was, in that golden age, a day always given up to amusement, for it was a holiday at the school. It was on one of these happy Saturdays that Bill Keeler and myself rose with the sun, and with light and careless hearts went to the mountains in search of adventures.

We took our course through a narrow vale at the foot of the mountain, along which ran a brook, that wound with many a mazy

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turn amid bordering hills, the slopes of which were covered with trees, or consisted of smooth, open pastures. The brook was famous for trout, and as Bill usually carried his hooks and lines, we had often amused ourselves in fishing. On the present occasion, as we were passing a basin of still water, where the gush of the rivulet was stayed by a projecting bank, Bill saw an uncommonly large trout: he was lying in the shadow of the knoll, perfectly still, except that the feathery fins beneath his gills gently fanned the water. I saw Bill at the instant he marked the fish. In a moment he lifted up and waved his hand as a sign to me. He then stepped softly backwards, and at a little distance knelt down, to hide himself from the view of the trout. All this time Bill was fumbling with a nervous quickness for his hook and line. First he ran his hands into the pockets of his trousers, seeming to turn over a great variety of articles there; then he felt in his coat pockets; and then he uttered two or three awkward words, which signified much anger.

Nothing could exceed the point of vexation

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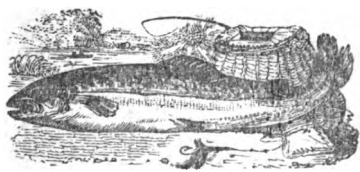
to which Bill was worked up, when, turning the last pocket inside out, and shaking it as if it had been a viper, he found that he had not a hook or line about him. Gathering up the articles and thrusting them back into their places, he looked about, and picking up a stone, approached the place where the trout was lying, and hurled it at him with spiteful vengeance, exclaiming—"If I am ever caught



without a fishhook again, I hope I may be shot!"

"Stop, stop, Bill!" said I; "do not be rash."

"I say I hope I may be shot if I am ever caught again without a fishhook!—so there!" said he, hurling another stone into the brook.

"Remember what you say now, Bill!" said I.

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"I will remember it," said my companion; and though nothing more was said of it at the time, I may as well observe now that he kept his word; for ever after I remarked that he carried a fishhook in his hatband, and, as he said, in fulfilment of his vow. Such was the eccentric humour of my friend, and such the real depth of his character and feelings, that a speech, uttered in momentary passion and seeming thoughtlessness, clung to his mind, and never parted from him till death. Could that poor boy have had the advantages of wise cultivation, what a noble heart had now beat in his breast! But, alas! he was bound to a briefer and more inglorious destiny!

We pursued our way up the valley, loth to leave the course of the rivulet; for there is a fascination about running water that few can resist—there is a beauty in it which enchants the eye—a companionship like that of life, and which no other inanimate thing affords. And of all brooks, this that I now describe was to me the sweetest.

After proceeding a considerable distance, the valley became narrowed down to a rocky

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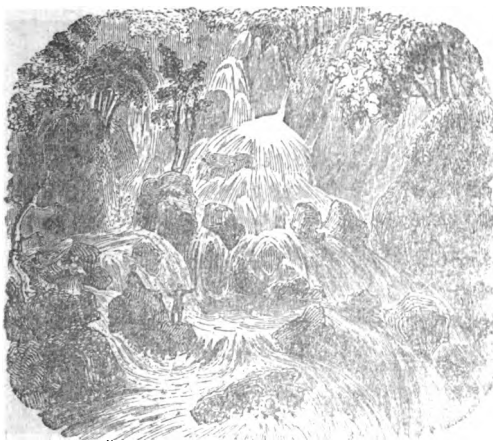
raviue, and the stream tumbled over a rugged and precipitous rock. At last, about half-way up the mountain, and at a considerable elevation, we reached the source of the rivulet, which consisted of a small lake of as pure water as ever reflected the face of Heaven



It was surrounded on three sides by tall cliffs, whose dark, shaggy forms in contrast, gave a silver brilliancy and beauty to the mirror-like water that lay at their feet. The other side of the lake was bounded by a

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sandy space, of small extent, in the centre of which stood a lofty tree.

The objects that first presented themselves, as we approached the lake, were a woodpecker sounding his watchman's rattle on the dry limb of a tree that projected over the water, by way of warning to the tenants of the mountain that danger was near; a heron, standing half-leg deep in the margin of the water, and seeming to be lost in a lazy dream; a pair of harlequin ducks that were swimming near the opposite shore; and a bald eagle, that stood upon the point of a rock which projected a few feet out of the water near the centre of the lake.

It was a time of feeling, rather than of speech. Neither my companion nor myself spoke of the beauty of that scene at the

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time; but we felt it deeply, and memory, to me, has kept a faithful transcript of that hour.

We had not advanced far, when, on passing through some bushes near a heap of rocks, I heard a rustling in the leaves.

Turning my eye in the direction of the sound, I saw a black snake, covered by leaves except his head and about a foot of his body. He was directly in my path, and, brandishing his tongue, seemed determined

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to oppose my progress. Bill had my gun, but I called to him, and he soon appeared. I pointed out the snake, but, refusing to fire, he approached the creature with a bold front; who, seeing that he could gain nothing by his threats, turned and fled through the leaves with amazing speed. Bill followed upon his trail, and came up with him just as he was seeking shelter in the crevice of a rock. He had buried about two feet of his length, when Bill seized his tail, and, holding it fast, prevented his farther progress. We then both of us took hold and tried to pull him out, but as he had coiled himself around the protuberances of the rock within, he resisted all our efforts.

Bill now directed me to bend down to him a pretty stout walnut sapling that was growing near. I complied with the command, and my companion, taking a piece of cord from his pocket, doubled the tail of the snake, and firmly lashed it to the top of the young tree. This being done—"Let go," said Bill, "and see which will hold on the longest." So, loosing our hold of the tree

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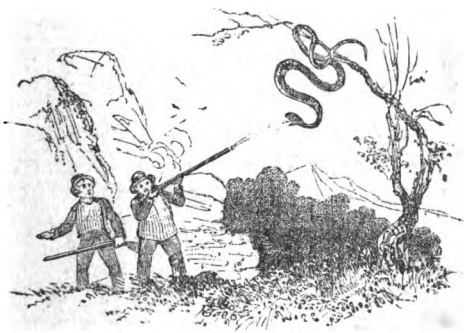
and of the snake, we stood by to see the result. The snake was so firmly tied as to render it impossible for him to escape, and the sapling pulled with a vigour and patience that were likely to prevail at last. We waited at the place for nearly an hour, when the ser-



pent slowly yielded, and the sapling jerked him into the air. There he hung, dangling and writhing, and thrusting out his tongue, but all to no purpose. Taking a fair aim with the gun, Bill now fired, and cut the poor reptile in twain.

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Such, or similar, no doubt, have been the adventures of many a Yankee youth before. I record them here, partly for the pleasure of reviewing the past, and partly to point the moral of this chapter—that youth is a portion of life to which, in after years, we usually look back with fond regard, as the happiest, if not the most useful, part of our existence.

Let my youthful friends mark the observation, and not be unmindful of their present privileges. Let them enjoy their young days, with thankfulness and moderation, and not be too sanguine of that future, which will disclose the truth that life is a journey, beset with the cares and toils and dangers of travel, without a resting-place. A resting place is indeed found, but it is only given when life ceases. While we live we are journeying; there is no fixed habitation for man on the earth: he is an emigrant to another country, and not a settler here. Young and old are fellow-pilgrims, and there is no knowing which may get to the end of the journey first. Let us, in attempting to

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make our journey as cheerful as we may, ever be careful to keep in view the place to which we are migrating.

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CHAPTER V.

AN ACCIDENT—RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS —A NEW COMPANION.

I LEFT school at the age of sixteen, having learned but little good while there. The false indulgence of my uncle, and the servile partiality of the school-master, had both a very bad effect upon my mind. I was selfish and wilful. When I was master of my own time, I at first used to feel an aversion to my uncle's bar-room, but this feeling passed away by degrees. Under the strong infection of the place, I partially adopted its habits; I learned to smoke and chew tobacco, though several fits of nervous sickness warned me of the violence I was doing to my nature. I even ventured to swear occasionally; and, if the truth must be told, I followed out, in various ways, the bad lessons that I learnt.

That I have escaped ruin is attributable

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to the kindness of Providence, and not to any resistance of evil which originated in my own breast. If Heaven had deserted me, I had been lost for ever.

One night after we had been drinking at the tavern, my companions and myself went out, bent on what was called a *spree*. Our first exploit was to call up the doctor of the

village, and ask him to hasten to Mrs. Sally St. John, who has been noticed before in these memoirs, insinuating that she was desperately ill. Our next adventure was to catch the parson's horse in the pasture, and tie him to the whipping-post. We then proceeded to a garden of water-melons, se-

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lected the largest and finest fruit and ripping them open, strewed the contents over the ground.

We then went to a garden belonging to a rich old farmer, who was celebrated for producing very fine pears. The window of the proprietor opened into the garden, and as he had the reputation of exercising a vigilant watch over his fruit, we felt the necessity of caution. But we were too much elated by our liquor and success in sport to be very circumspect. We got over the tall fence, and two or three of us ascended one of the trees. We had begun already to pluck the fruit, when the window of the old farmer slid silently upward, and a grizzled pate was thrust out. It was soon withdrawn, but in a few moments the barrel of a long gun was pushed forth, and a second after its contents were discharged, with a sound which, at that silent hour, seemed like the voice of thunder.

I was on the tree, with my back to the marksman, and presented a fair target to his aim. At the very instant of the discharge, I felt a tingling in my flesh; immediately

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after a dizziness came over my sight, and I fell to the ground. I was completely stunned, but my companions seized me and hurried me away. Clambering over stone walls, and pushing through a nursery of young trees, they secured their retreat. At a safe distance the party paused, and after a little space I recovered my senses. I found myself in great pain, however, and on examination it appeared that my left arm was broken. As carefully as possible I was now taken home. It was about midnight when we reached it, and my uncle, being informed that I was hurt, attempted to come to me. But he had been in bed only a short time, and according to his wont, he had taken a "night-cap," as he called it, and was utterly incapable of walking across the room. Some of the people, however, were aroused, and one went for the surgeon. The answer returned was, that some madcaps had been there and played off a hoax upon the doctor, and this application was no doubt intended as another, and he would not come. I therefore lay till morning in great pain, and when at last the doctor came, he found

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not only that one arm was broken, but that my back was wounded, and that I had been shot with bullets of salt! Several small pieces of salt were actually found imbedded in my skin!

I was hardly in a state to give an explanation; in fact, my reason had begun to waver. Strange visions flitted before my eyes: an old grizzled pate seemed bobbing out of a window, and making faces at me; then the head seemed a water-melon with green eyes; and then it turned into a fowling-piece, and while I was trying to look down its throat, it exploded and scattered my brains to the four winds! Here my vision ended, and with it all remembrance. I fell into a fever, and did not recover my senses for two weeks.

When my consciousness returned, I found myself attended by a man of the village, named Raymond, a brother of the minister, and whom I had long known. He was sitting by my bedside, with a book in his hand; but as I opened my eyes, I noticed that, while he seemed to be reading, his eyes were fixed on me with an anxious in-

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terest. In a moment after he spoke. "Are you better, Robert?" said he, in a tone of tenderness. I attempted to reply, but my tongue refused to move. Raymond saw my difficulty, and coming to the bedside, told me to remain quiet. "You have been ill," said he, "very ill, but you are better. Your life depends upon your being kept perfectly quiet."

Thus admonished, I closed my eyes, and soon fell asleep. The next day I was much better, and entered into some conversation with Raymond, who I then found had been my regular attendant. The surgeon soon after came, and pronounced me out of danger. "You are better, my young friend,"

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said he; "I think you are safe; but this getting salted like a herring, and tumbling off pear trees at midnight, is an awkward business, and cannot be often repeated with impunity." This latter remark being uttered with a significant smile, recalled to my mind the occasion of my sickness, and a sudden blush of shame covered my face. Raymond noticed my confusion, and by some remark immediately diverted my attention to another topic.

In a few days I was able to sit up in my bed, and was nearly free from pain. My arm, however, was still useless, and I was in fact, very feeble. I could talk with Raymond, however, and as his conversation was always engaging, the time did not pass heavily.—Raymond was a man of extensive reading, and great knowledge of the world. He thought and spoke like a philosopher, yet in the active business of life, in which he had been once engaged, from some cause or other, he had entirely failed. He had no regular employment, but spent a good deal of his time in reading; his brother, the mi-

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nister, having a good library. As he was very kind-hearted, however, and possessed a good deal of medical knowledge, he was often employed in attending upon sick persons, and for his services he would never receive any other compensation than what the consciousness of doing good might afford.

It was a mercy to me that I fell into the hands of poor Raymond, when my mind and heart were softened by my sickness, and by the humiliation I felt at having been detected in a disgraceful act, and so signally punished. His counsel, therefore, which was full of wisdom, and which he imparted in a way, at once to instruct and amuse, sunk into my mind like the seed sown in spring time, upon a prepared soil; and I have reason to believe that I may attribute not only the recovery of my body from disease, but the correction of some of the vices of my mind, to his conversations at my sick bedside.

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CHAPTER VI.

WEALTH AND POVERTY — RAYMOND'S STORY.

As Paul Raymond was one of the best friends I ever had, it is my desire to make my reader well acquainted with him. He was tall, thin, and stooping, his figure seeming to indicate great humility; his face was meagre and exceedingly pale; his hair black as jet, and hanging in long, thin curls down his neck. His eye was very large, and of a deep blue.

The whole aspect of my friend was marked with a childlike gentleness and almost timidity, though his high forehead and prominent Roman nose bespoke a manly intellect.

One morning as he was sitting by my bedside, I mentioned to Paul the change of feeling I had undergone in respect to himself, that I had once regarded him with indifference, but now I looked on him with

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respect and affection. "I cannot but wonder," said I, "how different you seem to me now, from what you used to do, Mr. Raymond."

Raymond. You say I seem different from what I once did. The change is in you, not in me. I am the same poor Paul Raymond, as before. You are something better than before this accident happened.

Merry. How am I better? I think I am worse: I have been guilty of folly, and, though thoughtlessly, of crime; I have been disgraced before the whole village; my arm is broken; I am sick and emaciated; and after all this, you tell me that I am better than before.

R. And I tell you the truth, boy. You have suffered, it is certain; but that suffering has been like medicine to your mind and heart. You were well in body, you were full of health and spirits, but there was disease within. Your heart was full of selfishness and pride; you felt that you could take care of yourself, and you cared not for the sympathy of others. You have now learnt a good lesson; your pride has been humbled,

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and you see your dependence upon others. You are more humble than before, and therefore I say you are better than before.

M. Then you think humility is a good thing?

R. Certainly, and pride a bad thing. God looks down upon the humble man with approbation and favour, and he sends to the humble man peace and consolation which the world cannot give or take away. God looks down upon the proud man as a fool, a creature as silly as the moth that buzzes in the flame of the lamp, only to perish in his folly. I shall tell you a story that will illustrate my meaning.

"There once lived in a village near London, a youth whom we will call Edward. His parents died when he was young, leaving him an ample estate. He was educated at one of the Universities, travelled for two years on the continent, and, at the age of twenty-four, returned to the paternal mansion, and established himself there. Being the richest person in the village, and the representative of a family of some antiquity, he became the chief personage of the place.

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Beside all this, he was esteemed remarkably handsome, possessed various accomplishments, and had very pleasing manners. He was, therefore, courted and flattered by the whole neighbourhood.

"Surrounded by luxuries, and admired by almost everybody, it would seem that Edward might have been happy; but he was of a discontented turn; and though, for a time, these things pleased him, he grew tired of them at last, and wished for some other sources of pleasure and excitement. At the University he had imbibed a taste for reading; but he could not now sit down to its quiet and gentle pleasures. He had been in the gay society of London and Paris, and had drank the cup of pleasure so deeply, that nothing but its dregs remained.

"Edward was therefore restless, discontented and miserable, while in the possession of all that usually excites the envy of mankind. He was rich; he was endowed with manly beauty and the most perfect health; he was admired, flattered, and sought after; yet he was unhappy. The reason of this he did not know; indeed, he did not

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look very deeply into the matter, but went on from one scene to another, seeking enjoyment, but turning with distaste and disappointment from everything. He was, however, too proud to let the world see his real condition; he kept up a fair outside, sustained his establishment with magnificence, and dressed himself, when he went abroad, with elegance and care; he affected gaiety in company, often led in the dance, was ever foremost in the chase, and was usually the life of the circle wherever he went.

"Edward had now reached the age of thirty years, and instead of finding his condition or the state of his feelings grow better, they seemed rather to grow worse. He became more and more unhappy. Every morning when he rose, it was with a kind of dread as to how he should contrive to kill time, to get through the day, to endure his own listlessness, or dissatisfaction, or disgust. The thought of setting about some useful or honorable employment, that would occupy his mind, give excitement to his faculties, and be one means of bringing satisfaction to

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his conscience, never entered his head. He had never been taught that no one has a right to lead an idle or useless life, and that no man can be happy who attempts to live only for himself.

"At this period, which was soon after the revolutionary war, America was attracting great attention, and Edward having met with one of his college mates who had been there, and who gave him glowing accounts of it, suddenly determined to sell his estates and set out for America, with the view of spending the remainder of his days there. He knew little of the country, but supposed it to be the contrast in everything to that in which he had lived, and thinking that any change must bring an improvement, he sold his property, and taking the amount in gold and silver, set out with it in a ship bound for New York.

"The vessel had a prosperous voyage till she arrived in sight of the highlands near the entrance of the harbour of New York. It was then that, just at evening, light gusts began to blow towards the land, and the captain showed signs of anxiety, lest he should

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not be able to get in before the storm arose, which he saw was coming. The passengers had dressed themselves to go on shore, and most of them, anxious to see their friends, or tired of the sea, were anticipating their arrival with delight. Edward, however, was an exception to all this. He went upon the deck, looked a few moments gloomily at the land that was visible low down in the horizon, and then retired to the cabin, where he gave himself up to his accustomed train of discontented and bitter thoughts.

"'I alone,' said he to himself, 'of all this company, seem to be miserable; all are looking forward with pleasant anticipations of some happiness, some enjoyment in store for them. But as for me—what have I to hope? I have no friends here; this is a land of strangers to me. It is true, I have wealth; but how worthless is it! I have tried its virtues in England, and found that it could not give me pleasure. Alas! life is to me a burden, and the sooner I part with it the better.'

"While Edward was pursuing this train of reflections in the cabin, the heaving of the

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vessel increased; the creaking of the timbers grew louder, and there was much noise and confusion on the deck, occasioned by running to and fro, the rattling of cordage, and the clanking of heavy irons. The commands of the captain became rapid and stern, and the thumping of the billows against the sides of the ship made her shiver from the rudder to the bowsprit.

"Edward was so buried in his own gloomy reflections that he did not for some time notice these events; but at last the din became so tremendous, that he started to his feet and ran upon deck. The scene that now met his eyes was indeed fearful. It was dark, but not so much so as to prevent the land from being visible; the wind was blowing with the force of a hurricane, and urging the vessel, now perfectly at its mercy, into the boiling waves that fretted and foamed along its edge. The captain had given up all hope of saving the ship.

"Edward was perfectly calm. The thought of losing his wealth crossed his mind, but it cost him not a struggle to be reconciled to its destruction. He then thought of sinking

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down in the waves to rise no more. To this, too, he yielded, saying briefly to himself, 'It is best it should be so.' Having thus made up his mind and prepared himself for the worst, as he fancied, he stood surveying the scene.

"At last, the vessel struck; a moment after, her masts fell, with their whole burden of spars, sails, and rigging; the waves then rose over the stern of the helpless hulk, and swept the whole length of it. Several of the passengers were hurried into the tide, there to find a watery grave; some clung to the bulwarks, and others tried to save themselves in various ways.

"Edward was himself plunged into the waves. His first thought was to yield himself to his fate without an effort; but the love of life revived, as he saw it placed in danger. He was an expert swimmer, and succeeded in getting hold of a spar, and was thus able to sustain himself upon the water.

"The night now grew dark, and Edward, being driven out to sea, was parted from the wreck, and could distinguish nothing but the dashing waves around him. He feared that

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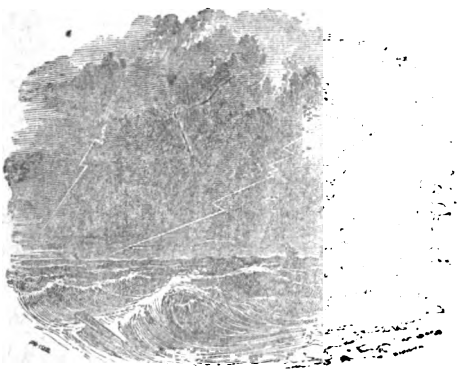
his strength would be insufficient to enable him to keep upon the spar. His anxiety increased; an awe of death which he had never felt before sprung up in his bosom, and an intense desire of life, that thing which he had so recently spurned as worthless, burned in



his bosom: so little do we know ourselves until adversity has taught us reflection. His feelings, however, did not overpower him. Using every effort of strength and skill, and rubbing his chilled limbs from time to time, he was able to sustain himself till morning

"In this situation, benumbed with the

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cold, faint and exhausted with exertion, he was on the point of yielding himself a prey to the waves, when a pilot-boat came into view. It gradually approached the spot where he was, and at last seemed so near him as almost to be within the reach of his voice. At this critical moment she made preparations to tack, and thus change her direction. Edward noticed these movements with indescribable anxiety: if she were to advance a few yards more, he would be discovered and saved; if she were to change her route ever so little, she would pass by, and he, unobserved and helpless, would perish. The experience of years seemed now crowded into one moment of agony. Weary, cold, exhausted, the poor sufferer wished not now to die, but to live. 'Help, help!' cried he with all his strength. 'O God, send me deliverance from these waves!' This earnest and agonizing petition was the first prayer he had uttered for years, and it was in behalf of that existence which, in the days of luxury and splendour—nay, only a few hours before, he had thought a burden and a curse.

"Watching the pilot-boat with the keen-

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est interest, poor Edward now sat upon the spar, almost incapable of moving, on account of his sufferings and his weakness. He saw at last the helm put down; he saw the vessel obey the impulse; he saw her swing round, the sail flapping in the wind, and then filling again; he then saw her shoot off in another direction, thus leaving him destitute of hope. His heart sank within him, a sickness came over his bosom, his senses departed, and he fell forward into the waves. At this moment he was discovered by the pilot. The vessel immediately steered towards him, and he was taken on board. In a few hours, he was at New York, and put under the care of persons who rendered him every assistance which he needed for his immediate comfort.

"It was several hours after his arrival at the city before Edward had fully recovered his senses. When he was completely restored, and began to make inquiries, he found that all his ship companions had perished. He, who probably cared least for life—he, who had no family, no friends, and who was weary of existence—he only, of all

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that ship's company, was the one that survived the tempest!

"There was something in this so remarkable, that it occupied his mind, and produced deep emotions. Again and again he said to himself, 'How happy, how thankful I feel, at being saved, when so many have been borne down to a watery grave!' The loss of his property, though it left him a beggar in the world, did not seem to oppress him: the joy of escape from death was to him a source of lively satisfaction; it gave birth to a new feeling—a sense of dependence on God, and a lively exercise of gratitude towards him.

"It also established in his mind a fact before entirely unknown, or unremarked—that what is called misfortune is often the source of some of our most exquisite enjoyments. 'It seems to me,' said Edward, in the course of his reflections, 'that, as gems are found in the dreary sands, and gold among the rugged rocks, and as the one are only yielded to toil, and the other to the smelting of the fiery furnace,—so happiness is the product of

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danger, suffering, and trial. I have felt more real peace, more positive enjoyment from my deliverance, than I was able to find in the whole circle of voluptuous pleasures yielded by wealth and fashion. I became a wretch, existence was to me a burden, while I was rich. But having lost my fortune, and experienced the fear of death, I am happy in the bare possession of that existence which I spurned before.'

"Such were the feelings and reflections of Edward for a few days after his escape; but at length it was necessary for him to decide upon some course of action. He was absolutely penniless. Everything had been sunk with the ship. He had no letters of introduction, he had no acquaintances in New York; nor, indeed, did he know any one in America, save that a younger brother of his was a clergyman in some part of the United States; but a coldness had existed between them, and he had not heard of him for years. Edward was conscious, too, that this coldness was the result of his own ungenerous conduct; for the whole of his father's estate had been given to him, to the exclusion of

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his brother, and he had permitted him to work his own way in life, without offering him the least assistance. To apply to this brother was, therefore, forbidden by his pride; and, besides, he had every reason to suppose that brother to be poor.

"What, then, was to be done? Every scheme that occurred to him seemed beset with difficulties. But events, day by day, pressed him to a decision. His landlord, at last, became uneasy, and told him, that to the debt already incurred he was welcome, in consideration of his misfortunes; but he was himself poor, and he respectfully begged him to make the speediest possible arrangements to give up his room, which he wanted for another boarder. 'I have been thinking,' said Edward in reply to this, 'that I might engage in the practice of physic. In early life I was thought to have a turn for the profession.' This suggestion was approved by the landlord, and means were immediately taken to put it in execution. Dr. Edward, late of England, was forthwith announced, and in a few weeks he was in the full tide of successful practice.

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"This fair weather, however, did not continue without clouds. Many persons regarded Dr. Edward only as one of the adventurers so frequently coming from foreign countries to repay the kindness and courtesy of the natives with imposition and villany. Various inquiries and stories were got up about him; some having a sprinkling of truth in them, and, for that reason, being very annoying. Edward, however, kept on his way, paying little heed to these rumours, fancying that, if left to themselves, they would soon die. And such would, perhaps, have been the result, had not a most unfortunate occurrence given matters another turn.

"In the house where Edward boarded, several small sums of money, and certain ornaments of some value, had been missed by the inmates, from time to time. Suspicions fell upon a French servant in the family; but as nothing could be proved against him, he was retained, and a vigilant watch kept over his actions. Discovering that he was suspected, this fellow determined to turn the suspicion against Edward; he, therefore, in the dead

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of night, took a valuable watch from one of the rooms, and laid it under the pillow of Edward's bed.

"This was done with such address, that neither the gentleman from whom the watch was stolen, nor Edward himself, knew anything of it at the time. The watch was missed in the morning, and the French servant was arrested. But as soon as the chambermaid began to make up Edward's bed, behold, the pilfered watch was there! The French servant was at once released, and Edward was arrested, briefly examined, and thrown into prison.

"The circumstances under which he had come to the country now all made against him. The unfavorable rumours that had been afloat respecting him were revived; all the stories of swindlers that had visited the country for twenty years back, were published anew, with embellishments. In short, Edward was tried and condemned by the public, while he lay defenceless in prison, and long before his real trial came on. The subject became a matter of some notoriety; the circumstances were detailed in the news-

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papers. A paragraph noticing these events met the eye of Edward's brother, who was settled as a clergyman in a country parish not far distant, and he immediately came to the city. Satisfying himself by a few inquries that it was indeed his brother who was involved in difficulty and danger, he

went straight to the prison, with a heart overflowing with sympathy and kindness. But pride was still in the way, and Edward haughtily repulsed him.

"The pious minister was deeply grieved, but he did not the less seek to serve his brother. He took care to investigate the facts, and became persuaded that the French

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CHAPTER VII.

SICK-ROOM INCIDENTS AND REFLECTIONS—MY RECOVERY.

THERE is nothing which more shows the advantages of religion and civilization, than the care and kindness bestowed upon the sick, among Christian nations. With savages, the sick person is usually left to himself, where, like a wild beast, he must await, in solitude, the result of his disease. There is little sympathy offered to him—there is no kind hand to wipe the cold sweat from his brow; no watchful friend at his bedside to supply every want, and alleviate, as far as may every pain. Sickness with the savage is and desolate; with Christians, though ains, it has its alleviations. I ring the perio cor- m my b as y ve exce 7

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servant had practised the deception as has been stated; but he was not able to prove it. He employed the best of counsel; but, in spite of all his efforts, and all his sympathy, his brother was found guilty, condemned, and consigned to a long imprisonment.

"Up to this time, the pride of Edward had sustained him; but it now gave way. He had borne the loss of fortune, but to be convicted of a low, base theft, was what his spirit could not endure. His health sunk under it, and his reason, for a time, departed. His sufferings during that dark hour, God only knows. He at last recovered his health and his senses, and then he heard that, on his death-bed, the French servant had confessed his iniquity. It was from the lips of his brother, and under his roof, whither he had been removed during his insanity, that Edward learnt these events. He had been released from prison, and his character was now cleared from the imputation of crime.

"From this period Edward was an altered man. His pride was effectually quelled; no longer did that disturber of earth's happiness,—the real serpent of Eden,—remain to

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keep him in a state of alienation from his brother. The two were now, indeed, as brothers: but there were other changes in Edward; his health was feeble, his constitution was broken; his manly beauty had departed, and he was but the wreck of former days. Yet, strange as it may seem, he now, for the first time, found true peace and genuine happiness. He had tasted of sorrow, and was acquainted with grief: this enabled him to enter into the hearts of other men, to see their sorrows, and to desire to alleviate them. A new world was open to him; a world of effort, of usefulness, of happiness. In the days of prosperity, he had no cares for anybody but himself; and mere selfishness had left him a wretch while in possession of all the supposed means of bliss. He had now made the discovery that pride is the curse of the human race, and humility its only cure; that trial, sorrow, and misfortune are necessary, in most cases, to make us acquainted with our own hearts, and those of our fellow-men; and that true bliss is to be found only in a course of life

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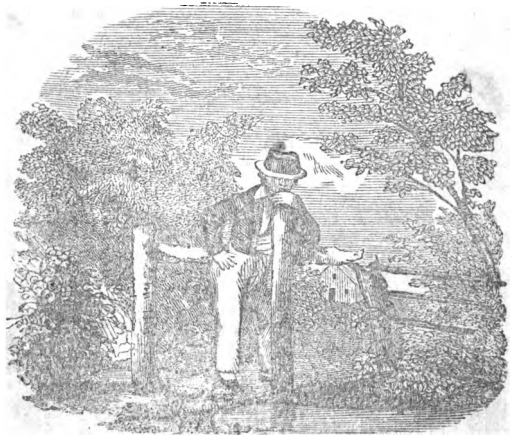
which seeks, earnestly and sincerely, the peace and happiness of others."

Here ended Raymond's story of the *School of Misfortune;* and I had no difficulty in discovering that he had been telling the story of his own life, though he had, in some respects, as I had reason to suppose, departed from its precise details.



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But still, in the midst of all this, and though my mind was pained with shame for the folly which had brought these evils upon me, I had a sense of peace and happiness shining through it all. When Raymond sat by my bed, his benignant eye resting upon me, I felt an indescribable degree of delightful emotion, arising, I believe, partly from gratitude, and partly from a confidence that all that could be done, would be done, in my behalf. Often as I awoke from my sleep, and saw him patiently watching by me, the tears would gush to my eyes; but they were not tears of unhappiness. I think he perceived my emotion, and believe he understood my feelings. One thing is certain —that sick-bed was to me the best school: it brought me Raymond's wise counsel; it brought me wholesome shame for my folly; it taught me my dependence on others. It also taught me one other lesson—and that is, never to distrust the kindness and virtue of my fellow-men.

This latter lesson was enforced by many circumstances. Not only was my bosom touched by the kindness of Raymond, but

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also by that of my uncle. Twice each day did he come to see me, and he always treated me with more tenderness than seemed to belong to his nature. He was a hale man himself, and it was his boast that he had never had a sick day in his life. Indeed, he had little sympathy for sickness, and usually expressed himself in terms of contempt toward everybody that chanced to be less robust than himself. When my fever was at its height, he insisted that all I wanted, in order to make me well again, was roast beef and raw brandy! Still, he did not interfere with the course prescribed by the physician, and took pains to see that everything was done for me that was deemed useful or necessary.

My companions of the village often sent to inquire after me, and Bill Keeler frequently stole in just to look at me, and say, "God bless you, Bob!" All these things went to my heart; but nothing affected me more than an event connected with something that had happened before my accident.

The schoolmaster of the village was one of those men who seek to accomplish every

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object by indirect means. He was what is called a cunning man, and was withal, exceedingly fond of power, in the exercise of which he was capricious, tyrannical, and unjust. At first he treated me with the greatest attention, and in fact picked me out as one of his favorites, upon whom he lavished his smiles and his praises. He had great faith in flattery, and believed that any person, young or old, might be influenced by it; and while it seemed to be his object to get my favor, he lost no opportunity of flattering me. I was well enough pleased with this for a time, though I could not but distrust a man who would condescend to such means of gaining his ends; while I almost despised him, I was not sufficiently firm nor wise to resist the influence of his smooth words.

There was in the school a boy by the name of William Bury, son of a poor Irishman that lived in the village. He was remarkably small of his age, but exceedingly active, and very lively and intelligent: at the same time he was shrewd and witty, and perceiving the weak points of the school-

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master's character, occasionally made them the target of his wit. As the master rendered each boy in the school a spy upon his fellows, he knew everything that was said and done; and poor Bill Bury was often punished for the freedom with which he indulged his tongue.

In process of time, Will and myself became the antipodes of the school: I was the favorite, and he the reprobate. Whatever he did was wrong: whatever I did was right. Under such circumstances it was natural that we should be rivals, and it was, no doubt, a part of the plan of the politic schoolmaster to keep us thus divided, that he might rule the more effectually.

During this state of things, several of the school-boys were one day skating upon a river that ran along the western border of the town—Will and myself being of the number. It had been filled with heavy rains, and was now of considerable width and depth. In the deepest part there was a breathing-hole in the ice, which, of course, we all sought to avoid. As I was swiftly skating toward this place, with the intention

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of turning aside as I approached it, one of my skates struck a small stick, which brought me down, and, carried forward by the impetus of my course, I was instantly plunged into the opening. I sunk beneath the surface of the water for a moment, but then rose, and caught hold of the ice, which, however, broke in my hands as I grasped it.

It was but a few seconds before I was completely chilled; but by this time, the boys around had raised a shout of terror, and several of them had gathered at a little distance, and were soon either silent with dismay, or raising idle screams for help. Among the number I noticed Bill Bury, and though I had been accustomed to speak lightly of him, I confess that at that fearful moment my chief hope rested in him. Looking at me intensely for a moment, and then casting a searching glance round, he sped away like an arrow. In the space of a minute, he returned, bringing a long stick or rail which he had plucked from a neighboring fence. Calling aloud for all around to give place, he laid the rail down upon the ice, and dexterously slid it across the opening, pushing it so

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close as to bring it within my reach. I was, however, so benumbed, that, in attempting to take hold of it, I lost my hold of the ice, and sank senseless beneath it.

Will hesitated not an instant, but plunged into the water, and, as I rose, he caught me in his arms. Grasping me tight by the right

arm, while he held on to the rail by the left, he supported himself and me; at the same time he commanded the boys to get two more rails. These were brought and laid across the opening, and thus support was furnished for two of them to come and lift us out.

In this way my life was saved: I owed it to the courage, skill, and devotedness of Will

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Bury—my rival, and, as I had esteemed him, my enemy. I was not so base as to overlook his generous conduct, or to permit the relation in which we stood to abate my praises of his noble action. The schoolmaster, in deed, praised Will for an act that no one could fail to admire; but he sought every occasion from that day to ruin him in my estimation. At the same time he tried, in many cunning and sly ways, to poison Will's mind with jealousy of me.

It was not long, therefore, before we were again in antagonist positions, and at last an open breach took place between us. In process of time Will went to learn the trade of a carpenter, at the distance of a mile or two, and then I seldom saw him. Whenever we met we did not speak to each other. This was the state of things when the accident happened which laid me on a bed of sickness. While I was recovering, I often thought of Will Bury, and my heart reproached me keenly for permitting my better feelings to be turned against him. In short, I yearned to see him; and it was while I was one day thinking about him, that I saw

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him come softly to the door and ask Raymond how I was. I instantly called him to my bedside, and I never felt a warmer emotion than when he came. He, too, was much affected, and tears—the first I ever saw the gay-hearted fellow shed—fell upon my cheek.

From that day we were friends; and I thus learned to put a just value upon a generous heart—though it may belong to a poor boy. This was one of the benefits for which I was indebted to a sick-bed.

In about two months after my accident, I

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rose from the sick-bed, and was permitted to walk abroad. Although it was autumn, and the sere and yellow leaves were now nearly stripped from the trees, the face of nature bore an aspect of loveliness to me. I had so long been shut up, and excluded alike from fresh air and the out-door scenes of life, that I was like a man long deprived of food, with a ravenous appetite and a full meal before him. I enjoyed everything; the air, the landscape, the walk—each and all delighted me. My fever was entirely gone, and having nothing but weakness to contend with, I recovered my former state of health and strength in the course of a few weeks.

But I was not restored to my full flow of spirits—nor, indeed, from that day, have I ever felt again the joyous gush of the emotions of boyhood. My accident, attended by the wholesale shame it produced, had in no small degree abated my self-appreciation. I was humbled, if not before the world, at least in my own esteem. My sick-bed reflections, too, had served to sober my mind, and give me a sense of responsibility I had never felt before I had, in short, passed

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from the gay thoughtlessness of a boy to somewhat of the sobriety of manhood.

I did not, myself, remark the change in my manners or my character; but others did. My uncle, particularly, noticed it, and became uneasy, or rather vexed about it: he was a jolly old man, and wished everybody else to be jolly too. Nor could he readily comprehend why such a change should have come over me: he did not easily appreciate sickness, or its effects; nor did he estimate the sobering influences of reflection.

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CHAPTER VIII.

EMIGRATION TO UTICA—AN EXPEDITION.

WHEN I was about eighteen years of age, I left Salem for the first time since my arrival in the village. At that period a number of people were removing from the place where I lived to seek a settlement at Utica. That place is now a large city; but at the time I speak of, about five and thirty years ago, it was a small settlement, and surrounded with forests. The soil in that quarter was, however, reputed to be very fertile, and this circumstance induced many to remove thither from the neighboring towns.

Among others who had made up their minds to follow the custom of that day, was a family by the name of Stebbins, consisting of seven persons. In order to convey these, with their furniture, it was necessary to have

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two waggons, one of which was to be driven by Mat Olmsted, and, at my earnest solicitation, my uncle consented that I should conduct the other.

Those who are ignorant of the state of things at that time, and regard only the present means of travelling, can hardly conceive how great the enterprise was esteemed in which I was now engaged. It must be remembered that no man had then even dreamed of a railroad or a steamboat. The great canal, which now connects Albany with Buffalo, was not commenced. The common roads were rough and devious, and instead of leading through numerous towns and villages, as at the present day, many of them were only ill-worked passages through swamps and forests. The distance was about two hundred miles—and though it may now be travelled in twenty hours, it was esteemed, for our loaded waggons, a journey of two weeks.

Mat Olmsted was somewhat of a wag; he was also a cheerful, shrewd, industrious fellow, and well suited for such an expedition. He encountered every difficulty with

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energy, and enlivened the way by his jokes and his pleasant observations.

It was in the autumn when we began our journey, and I remember one evening, when we had stopped at a tavern, and were sitting by a blazing fire, a young fellow came in with a new hat on: it was very glossy, and the youth seemed not a little proud of it. He appeared also to be in excellent humor with himself, and had, withal, a presuming and conceited air. Approaching where Mat was sitting, warming himself by the fire, the young man shoved him a little aside, saying, "Come, cannot you make room for your betters?"

"To be sure I can for such a handsome gentleman as yourself," said Mat, good-naturedly: he then added, "That is a beautiful hat you have got on, sir; it looks like a real salamander!"

"Well," said the youth, "it is a pretty good hat, I believe; but whether it is a salamander or not, I cannot say."

"Let me see it," said Olmsted; and, taking it in his hand, he felt it with his thumb and finger, smelt it, and smoothed

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down the fur with his sleeve. "Yes," said he, at length, "that is a real salamander hat; and if it is, you may put it on the fire, and it will not burn any more than a witch's broomstick."

"Did you say you would bet that it is a salamander hat?" said the young man.

"To be sure I will," said Mat; "I will bet you a mug of flip of it; for if there ever was a salamander hat, that is one; and if you put it on the fire you will prove it to your satisfaction."

"Done!" said the youth; and the two having shaken hands in token of mutual agreement, the youth gave his hat to Olmsted, who put it on the fire. The people in the bar-room, attracted by the singular wager, had gathered round the fire, to see the result of the experiment. In an instant the hat was enveloped by the flames, and in the course of a few seconds it began to bend and writhe, and then curled into a scorched and blackened cinder.

Mat Olmsted, seizing the tongs and poking out the crumpled relic from the bed of coals, exclaimed, with well-feigned astonish-

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ment, "Whoever saw the like of this! it was not a salamander, after all! Well, sir, you have won the bet. Landlord, give us a mug of flip."

The force of the joke soon fell upon the conceited young man. He had indeed won the wager—but he had lost his hat! At first he was angry, but Matthew soon cooled him down. "Do not mind it, my lad," said he; "it will do you good in the long run. You are like a young cock, that is tickled with his tall red comb, and having had it pulled off, is ever after a wiser fowl. Take my advice, and if you have a better hat than your neighbors, do not think that it renders you better than they. It is not the hat, but the head under it, that makes the man. At all events, do not be proud of your hat till you get a real salamander!"

This speech produced a laugh at the expense of the coxcomb, and he soon left the room. He had suffered a severe rebuke, and I could hardly think that my companion had done right; and when I spoke to him afterward, he seemed himself to regret what he had done. He, however, excused the action,

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by saying that the fellow was conceited and insolent, and he hoped the lesson would be useful to him.

We plodded along upon our journey, meeting with no serious accident, and in the course of five or six days were approaching Albany. Within the distance of a few miles, Matthew encountered a surly fellow, in a waggon. The path was rather narrow, and the man refused to turn out and give half the road. High words ensued; and, finally, my friend, brandishing his whip, called out aloud, "Turn out; if you do not, I will serve you as I did the man yesterday!"

The waggoner was alarmed at this threat, and turning out, gave half the road. As he was passing by, he had some curiosity to know what the threat portended; so he said, "Well, sir, how did you serve the man yesterday?" "Why," said Matthew, smiling, "I turned out myself!" This was answered by a hearty laugh, and after a few pleasant words between the belligerent parties, they separated, and we pursued our journey.

Albany is now a large and handsome city; but at this time it contained but about

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three thousand people, a very large part of whom were Dutch, who could not speak much English. None of the fine streets and splendid public buildings, which you see there now, were in existence then. The streets were narrow and dirty, and most of the houses were low and irregular, with steep roofs, and of a dingy color: some were built of tiles, some of rough stones, some of wood, and some of brick. It was, altogether, one of the most disagreeable looking places I ever saw.

We remained there but a few hours. Proceeding on our journey, we soon reached Schenectady, which we found to be a poor, ill-built, Dutch village, though it is a handsome town now.

We sat out early the next morning, and by dint of plodding steadily on through mud and mire, we at last reached the town of Utica, having been fourteen days in performing the journey from Salem. We found the place to contain about a thousand people, all the houses being of wood, and most of them built of logs. The town, however, had a bustling and thriving appearance, notwith-

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standing that the stumps of the forest were still standing in the streets.

I noticed a great many Indians about the town, and soon learned that they consisted of the famous tribes called the Six Nations. Some of these are still left in the State of

New York, but they have dwindled down to a very small number. At the time of my journey, they consisted of several thousands, and were still a formidable race. They were at peace with the white people, and seemed

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t› behold their hunting-grounds turned into meadows and wheat fields, with a kind of sullen and despairing submission.

One of the first settlers in this vicinity was Judge W., who established himself at Whitestown, about four miles from Utica. This took place about a dozen years before my visit. He brought his family with him, among whom was a widowed daughter with an only child—a fine boy of four years old. You will recollect that the country around was an unbroken forest, and that this was the domain of the savage tribes.

Judge W. saw the necessity of keeping on good terms with the Indians, for as he was nearly alone, he was completely in their power. Accordingly he took every opportunity to assure them of his kindly feelings, and to secure good-will in return. Several of the chiefs came to see him, and all appeared pacific. But there was one thing that troubled him; an aged chief or *sachem* of the Seneca tribe, and one of great influence, who resided at the distance of six miles, had not yet been to see him; nor could he, by any means, ascertain the views

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and feelings of the sachem, in respect to his settlement in that region. At last he sent him a message, and the answer was, that the chief would visit him on the morrow.

True to his appointment the sachem came. Judge W. received him with marks of respect, and introduced his wife, his daughter, and the little boy. The interview that followed was deeply interesting. Upon its result, the judge conceived that his security might depend; and he was, therefore, exceedingly anxious to make a favorable impression upon the distinguished chief. He expressed to him his desire to settle in the country; to live on terms of amity and good fellowship with the Indians; and to be useful to them by introducing among them the arts of civilization.

The chief heard him out, and then said, "Brother, you ask much, and you promise much. What pledge can you give me of your good faith?"

"The honor of a man that never knew deception," was the reply.

"The white man's word may be good to

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the white man, yet it is but wind when spoken to the Indian," said the sachem.

"I have put my life into your hands," said the judge; "is not this an evidence of my good intentions? I have placed confidence in the Indian, and I will not believe that he will abuse or betray the trust that is thus reposed."

"So much is well," replied the chief; "the Indian will repay confidence with confidence: if you will trust him, he will trust you. But I must have a pledge. Let this boy go with me to my wigwam; I will bring him back in three days with my answer."

If an arrow had pierced the bosom of the mother, she could not have felt a keener pang than went to her heart, as the Indian made this proposal. She sprang from her seat, and rushing to the boy, who stood at the side of the sachem, looking into his face with pleased wonder and admiration, she encircled him in her arms, and pressing him close to her bosom, was about to fly from the room. A gloomy and ominous frown came over the sachem's brow, but he did not speak.

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But not so with Judge W. He knew that the success of their enterprise, the very lives of his family depended upon the decision of the moment. "Stay, stay, my daughter," said he: "bring back the boy, I beseech you; he is not more dear to you than to me; I would not risk the hair of his head. But, my child, he must go with

the chief: God will watch over him. He will be as safe in the sachem's wigwam as beneath our roof and in your arms."

The agonized mother hesitated for a moment; she then slowly returned, placed the boy on the knee of the chief, and, kneeling at his feet, burst into a flood of tears. The gloom passed from the sachem's brow, but

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he said not a word. He arose, took the boy in his arms and departed.

I shall not attempt to describe the agony of the mother for the three ensuing days: she was agitated by contending hopes and fears. In the night she awoke from sleep, seeming to hear the screams of her child calling upon his mother for help: but the time wore away, and the third day came. How slowly did the hours pass! The morning waned; noon arrived; and the afternoon was now far advanced; yet the sachem came not. There was gloom over the whole household: the mother was pale and silent, as if despair were settling coldly around his heart. Judge W. walked to and fro, going every few minutes to the door, and looking through the opening into the forest toward the sachem's abode.

At last, as the rays of the setting sun were thrown upon the tops of the forest around, the eagle feathers of the chieftain were seen dancing above the bushes in the distance. He advanced rapidly, and the little boy was at his side. He was gaily attired as a young chief—his feet being

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dressed in moccasins; a fine beaver skin was over his shoulders, and eagles' feathers were stuck into his hair. He was in excellent spirits, and so proud was he of his honors, that he seemed two inches taller than before.

He was soon in his mother's arms, and in that brief minute, she seemed to pass from death to life. It was a happy meeting—too happy for me to describe.

"The white man has conquered!" said the sachem; "hereafter let us be friends. You have trusted the Indian; he will repay you with confidence and friendship." He was as good as his word; and Judge W. lived for many years in peace with the Indian tribes, and succeeded in laying the foundation of a flourishing and prosperous community.

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CHAPTER IX.

OUR RETURN — THE WOODS — THE VOYAGE ON THE RIVER.

MAT OLMSTED and myself had to find our way back to Salem on foot, for there were no stages, canal-boats, or railroads then. I did not myself dislike the plan, for I was fond of a tramp, especially with so cheerful a companion as Matthew.

We had each provided ourselves with a bear-skin, which was rolled up and strapped upon the shoulder. Matthew had also a tinder-box, with flint and steel. These precautions were necessary, as it was likely that we might occasionally be obliged to find our lodgings in the forest.

It was a bright morning in the latter part of November, when we departed, and the cheerfulness of the weather found its way to our bosoms. I was so light of heart as hardly to feel the ground upon which I trod.

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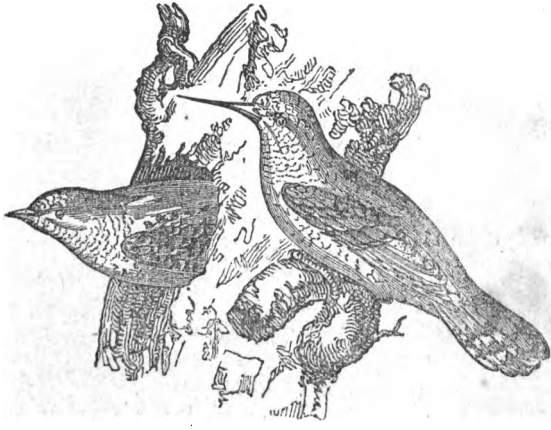
We marched rapidly on, and in a few hours were several miles from the town, and winding along the devious road that led through the tall forest.

Although the leaves were stripped from



most of the trees, and the flowers were sleeping in their tombs—though the birds had fled, and their happy minstrelsy was heard no more, still there were signs of cheerfulness around us. The little woodpeckers were creeping up and down the hoary oaks, seek-

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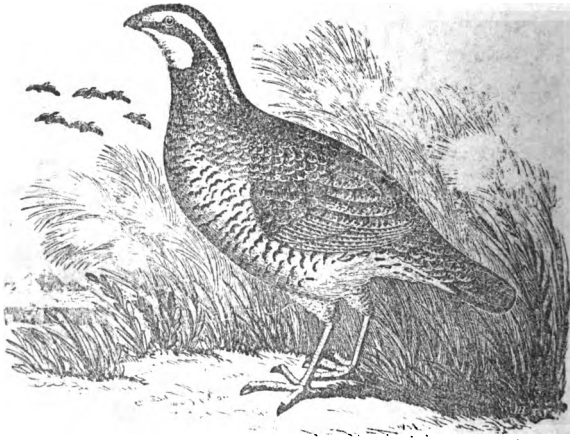
ing for the worms that had taken winter quarters in the bark.

Small flocks of wild turkeys frequently crossed our path; the partridges were calling their mates by flapping their wings upon some rotton log, thus producing a sound like the roll of a distant drum; the black and



gray squirrels, in vast numbers, were holding their revel upon the walnut and chestnut trees, occasionally chasing each other, like birds, among the branches; and now and then a deer bounded before us, gazed back-

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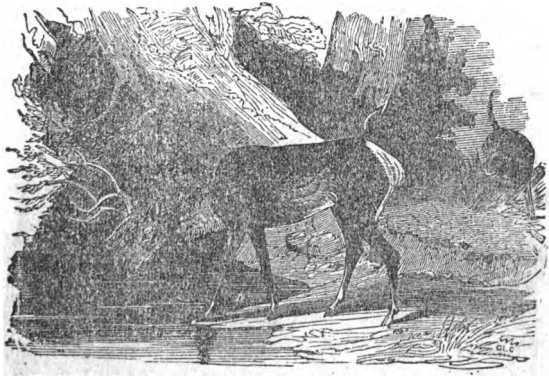
ward for a moment, and then, with his tail and antlered head erect, plunged into the wood. When evening approached we found we had proceeded full five and twenty miles. We were then in the midst of woods, and finding a partial shelter under a rock,



Matthew made a fire, and we prepared to pass the night there.

I cannot easily make those of my readers, who have always lived in cities or towns, understand the pleasure of sleeping in the

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woods, with no roof but the sky. Perhaps most persons would think this a hardship, and so it would be if we had to do it always; but by way of adventure now and then, particularly when one is about seventeen, with such a clever fellow as Mat for a companion and guide, the thing is quite delightful.

I assisted Mat in collecting some faggots for our fire—but every moment kept looking around, expecting to see some wild animal showing his face between the trunks of the gray old oaks. I mistook a stump for a bear's head; then I thought a bush at a little distance was some huge monster, crouching as if to spring upon us.

The night stole on apace, and soon we were surrounded with darkness, which was rendered deeper by the fire we had kindled. The scene was a wild one: the trees that stood around, had the aspect of giants, lifting their arms to the sky;—and their limbs often assumed the appearance of serpents, or demons. Around us all was blackness.

When our fire had been burning for about half an hour, Matthew having unbuckled his pack, took out some dried deer's flesh, upon

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which we made a hearty supper. We talked on various subjects; and Mat, who was clever in telling a story, amused me very much for a time. At last, however, I fell asleep.

I slept pretty well during the night, though I waked up several times and saw Mat with one eye open, at my side. Feeling that I had a faithful sentinel to keep guard, I fell back into my repose. When the sun rose it was a beautiful frosty morning, and the black and gray squirrels were enlivening the woods with their merry gambols. I should gladly have dwelt in the place for a long time, and really began to feel that I should like to turn Indian and make the forest my dwelling-place. But this was momentary: we soon began our march, and entering the high road, proceeded on our way to Albany.

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We reached Albany in a few days, and finding a sloop about to depart for New York, we concluded to take passage in her and go by the Hudson river to that city: this was a little out of our way, but we did not mind that. The captain of the vessel was a Dutchman named Dyke: he was a short, stout, broad-shouldered man, and had a pipe in his mouth nearly the whole time. Mat Olmsted called him Captain Volcano.

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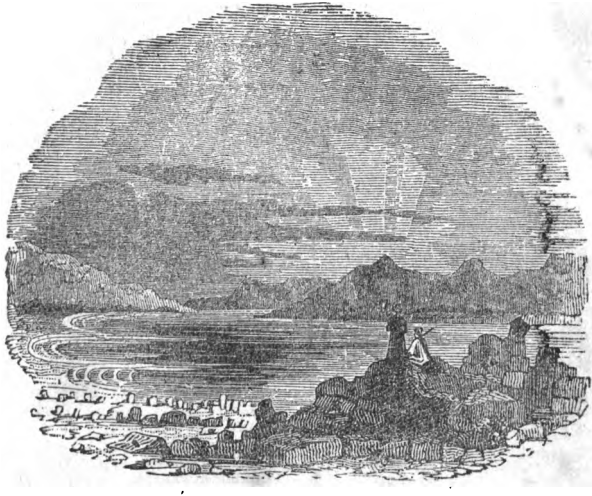
CHAPTER X.

AUTUMN SCENERY — MAJOR ANDRE — THE STEAM-BOAT — NEW-YORK — RETURN.

THE next morning was fair, and we glided rapidly down the river. The banks on each



side were hilly, and presented several small towns to our view. At length we noticed on the western border a tall blue mountain.

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which seemed to rise up like a vast thunder-cloud: this, I was told, was called the Kattskill. It consists of many peaks, with deep ravines, and beautiful waterfalls between them. The scenery among these mountains

is so wild and interesting that many people visit it every year. Opposite to these mountains is the city of Hudson. We stopped there about an hour. I found it quite a small place then, but now it has seven thousand inhabitants.

Having taken on board three or four per

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sons, with a quantity of butter, cheese, and other articles for New York, we departed and proceeded down the river. The scenery was still very beautiful. The river wound be-

tween tall mountains, which came down to the water's edge, and seemed sometimes to encircle it, so as to make it appear like a lake. But as we proceeded, the vast mountains seemed to recede, and open a passage for us.

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Frequently we passed close to the shore, and I could not but admire the wonderful beauty of the trees that clothed the sides of the mountain.

The next day we passed by a lofty cliff, called West Point, where old Fort Putnam is situated, and where there is now an academy in which young men receive a military education. This was a famous place in the revolutionary war. Here was the scene of Benedict Arnold's treachery. He was intrusted with the command of this fort by Washington, who had great confidence in him; but Arnold was a bad man, and he secretly agreed to give up the fort to the British, if they would pay him a large sum of money, and give him a command in their army. Major André, a British officer, came up the river from New York, and met Arnold one night to arrange the scheme.

On his return, André was captured by some Americans, and brought before Washington. He was tried as a spy, and, being convicted, was sentenced to death, this being according to the usages of war. André was a fine young officer, and Washington

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wished very much to save his life. But this he could not accomplish consistently with his duty to his country.

André was confined at a house in the town of Bedford, next to Salem, and my friend Mat Olmsted recollected perfectly well to have seen him there. He described him as a tall young man, with blue eyes, his hair powdered white, and wearing a red coat. Matthew told me a great many stories about him. He said all the people were very sorry that he should be executed. When he passed along between the files of soldiers to the scaffold, there was scarcely an individual who did not weep. Tears even rolled down the rugged cheeks of the soldiers, who had been accustomed to scenes of battle and bloodshed.

André alone seemed firm and collected. He walked erect, and such was his presence of mind when he ascended the scaffold, that, happening to soil his coat by pressing against one of the posts, he calmly took out his handkerchief and brushed the dust away. This was a kind of type and illustration of his life and character. Though he was a spy,

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he did not die dishonored; but the dignity of his bearing brushed away the soil upon the soldier, and he perished amid the regrets of those whom war had made his enemies, leaving behind him thousands of hearts to mourn his untimely fate.

The day after we passed West Point we saw something coming up the river, paddling through the water, and smoking away at a great rate. Mat said it must be a Dutchman, and a cousin to our Captain Volcano; but we were soon told that it was a steamboat! I had heard of such a thing, but had never seen one. There had been a good deal said in the newspapers about one Robert Fulton, who was trying to make vessels go by fire and water instead of wind. Most people thought Fulton either crazy or a fool, to attempt so hopeless a task.

But Fulton was a great man, whose mind was set upon a great object. So, letting the world make itself merry at his expense, he went calmly and patiently on. If he met with a difficulty he labored till he overcame it; sneers, scoffs, gibes, could not turn him from his purpose. He persevered, and at

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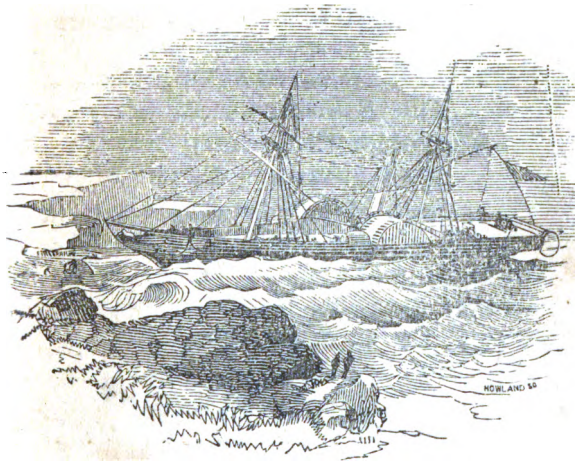
last he triumphed. The engine began to turn the crank, the wheels went round, the pad-



dles took hold of the wave, the boat moved forward, and steam navigation was accomplished.

This was perhaps the greatest invention of modern times. I am speaking of what happened in 1808. The journey of a week is at present but the trip of a day—a voyage of two months is but the passage of a fortnight.

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It used to be often a fortnight's work to get a vessel from New York to Albany; now a steamboat with five hundred passengers will accomplish it in twelve hours!

The little steamboat approached us rapidly. Never in my life have I felt a deeper excitement than at that moment! All the people on board our sloop were leaning over the side, straining their eyes to watch this wonder of the water. On she came, cutting the current and seeming like a thing of life, moving by her own power. I have seen other steamboats since; those that were ten times as large; but never one that touched my imagination like that. We passed close to her side. There was a tall, slender man standing upon her deck. His face was dark, and careworn; his eye, black, deep-set, and sparkling; his hair black and curling, but a little grizzled. It was Robert Fulton himself! His name was spoken by our captain, and instantly a cheer broke from every man on board our vessel.

In a day or two after meeting the steamboat, we arrived at the city of New York. Nearly ten years had elapsed since I had left

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it. I recollected very little of it. It was indeed like a new place to me at first. I felt as if I had never seen it before, until, after a day or two it became familiar to me as if I had once seen it in a dream. Though it was then a great city, New York was much smaller than it is now. It had not more than one-fourth part as many inhabitants as at present.

After three days, Matthew and I entered a sloop and sailed to Norwalk, in Connecticut. Having landed, we immediately set out on foot for Salem, which is a distance of about twenty miles. I had now been gone a month, and was exceedingly anxious to get home.

As I began to approach the village, my heart beat quick at the idea of getting home, of meeting my uncle, and seeing my friends and companions once more. Not a thought of evil fortune crossed my mind. I expected to see them all well and happy as when I left them. When we reached the village, it was night. We met no one in the street—all was still and solitary. We came to the tavern. There was a bright light in the bar-room, and it looked as cheerful as ever. I was about to

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enter, when a dusky figure took hold of my arm and said, "Go not in there. Come with me." I perceived in a moment that it was old Sarah of the mountain. She led me to the front door, and as we passed along, she said, in a low, but solemn tone, "He is gone, lad, he is gone. There is trouble for you here. When it is all over, come and see me in the mountain."

I was struck with horror, and stood still for a moment. I was alone, for Matthew had gone into the bar-room. I was convinced that my uncle was dead. I grew giddy, and the dim objects that were near me seemed to swim around. I recovered, however, lifted the latch and went in. The entry was dark, and I was obliged to grope my way to the stairs. I ascended and approached my uncle's chamber. It was partly open, and there was a dim light within. I was about to enter, but paused a moment at the threshold, and looked round. On a low couch lay the lifeless form of my uncle, and at a little distance sat Raymond, pale as marble, and wrapped in profound meditation. My step was so light that he did not hear my ap-

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proach, but my quick and convulsed breath roused him. He instantly came to me, but spoke not.

I cannot dwell upon the scene, nor could I describe my feelings, should I attempt it. For nearly an hour my heart was stunned, my mind bewildered. But tears at length came to my relief, and after a time I was able to hear from Raymond the sad story of my uncle's death. He had died in a fit, cut down without a moment's warning, and, as I afterwards learned, in consequence of his intemperate habits.

The funeral took place the next day. I walked in the procession to the burial ground, but was so completely overwhelmed with my loss as scarcely to notice anything around me. I was now without a relative in the world.

A few days after these events, an examination of my uncle's affairs was made, and it was discovered that he had died insolvent. Every farthing of my own property was gone, and I was now a beggar! These facts were told me by Raymond; they did not, however, immediately make a deep impression upon me; but I soon learned what it is to be

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without parents, without money, and without a home.

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CHAPTER XI.

A VISIT TO SARAH'S CAVE—A SPLENDID GIFT—DISAPPOINTMENT—NEW YORK.

A MONTH passed away after my uncle's death, during which I was in a sort of maze; I did not know what to do, and now, after many years are gone, I can hardly recollect anything that occurred during that period. I seemed lost, and it was not till the day came when the tavern was to be sold, with all its furniture that I was fully recalled to consciousness.

I remember that day well. The sale was by auction, and the place which had been a home to me for years was knocked down to the highest bidder. The purchaser was a stranger to me, and took immediate possession. I still remained in the house; and it was not till three or four days after he and his household had come, that the thought en-

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tered my head that I was to leave it. The man said to me one day—"Well, Robert—when do you intend to go?" I did not understand him at first, but in a moment it rushed into my mind, that this was a hint for me to depart.

I felt mortified and ashamed, almost insulted; for it seemed like turning me out of doors, and by my own stupidity I had subjected myself to such an indignity. I made no reply—but took my hat and left the house. I wandered forth, hardly knowing which way I went. In a short time I found myself ascending the mountain, toward old Sarah's cave. It now came suddenly to my recollection that the hermitess had invited me to come and see her, if at any time I was in trouble.

Although she was not, perhaps, the wisest of counsellors, yet, in my present disturbed state of mind, it suited me well enough to go to her. Indeed, I felt so miserable, so lonely from the loss of my uncle, so helpless from the loss of my property, that I thought of taking up my abode with the gray old dame of the rock, and living there the rest of my

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life. With these strange notions running in my head, I approached her den.

It was a chill December evening, and I found her in her cave. She bade me welcome, and I sat down. "I knew it would come to this," said she: "I knew it long ago. Your uncle was kind-hearted, as the

world say; but is it kind to spend what is not one's own? Is it kind to waste the property of the orphan, and leave one's sister's child to beggary? Is it kind to eat, drink, and be merry, when another's tears must pay the reckoning?"

"Nay, nay," said I; you must not speak

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in this way. My uncle is dead, and I will not hear his name mentioned, except in words of kindness and charity: he loved me; he ever spoke kindly to me; he was to me as a father; he would not have done more for a son than he did for me."

I could say no more, for tears and sobs choked my utterance, and old Sarah then went on. "Well, well; let it be so, let it be so. But I must tell you, Master Merry, that I knew your mother well. We were both of the same country, both natives of England, and we came to America in the same ship. She was a good woman, and in the dark days of my life, she was kind to me. I will repay it to her child."

Saying this, she went to the end of the cave, and took a small wooden box from a crevice in the rock. This she opened, and handed a parcel to me, adding; "This will repair your loss." I looked at her in some doubt. "Examine what I give you," said she, "and you will understand me."

I opened the parcel, which consisted of a roll, with a covering of silk. I found in it several thin pieces of paper, resembling bank

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notes, and reading them as well as I could by the dim light which came in at the entrance of the cave, I perceived that they were government bills, of a thousand dollars each. "I am glad for your sake," said I, handing back the parcel to Sarah—"that you have so much money, but I cannot consent to take it from you."

"And what do I want with it?" said she, quickly. "It has been in my possession for forty years, I have never yet seen the need of it. This rock has been my shelter—this rock is my bed. The forest yields me food, and charity gives me raiment. That money can never be of use to me. I have sworn never to use it, and if you do not take it, it will perish with me."

I endeavoured to persuade the hermitess to change her views and her mode of life. I urged her, as she had so much money, to leave her cave, and procure the comforts and luxuries which her age and infirmities required. But she was fixed in her purpose, and my reasoning was without effect. We talked till the night was nearly gone. At last I consented to take a part of the cash, but

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she insisted that I should take the whole; and believing that she would never use it, I received it, intending to reserve, at least, a portion of it for her use, in case of need. The kind-hearted old woman seemed much delighted, and my own breast was warmed with gratitude. I felt not only that I had again the means of independence, but that I had also a sure and steadfast friend.

It did not diminish my pleasure that this friend was an old woman, clothed in rags, and regarded with contempt by the world. I left her the next morning, with many thanks, and a heart overflowing with gratitude. I descended the mountain, and entered the high-road. I soon reached the village, and immediately went to see Raymond, to tell him of my interview with the hermitess. Having related what had happened, I took out the money, and placed it in his hands. Guess my surprise and disappointment, when he told me that the ten bills of a thousand dollars each, were "Continental notes," and not worth a farthing! They had been issued by the government during the war of the revolution, but had become depre-

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ciated, so that a thousand dollars of this paper, were sold for a single dollar in silver! The government had, indeed, made some provision for the payment of such notes as had been brought forward before a certain time, but these had been withheld beyond the period, and were now utterly without value.

I had, of course, no suspicion that Sarah was aware of this fact. The money was once good; and having lived apart from the world, she had not known the change that had come over the currency. Having no want of money, it was all the same to her, whatever might be its worth; and it was only till she desired to do an act of kindness to the child of an early friend, that what was once a fortune to her, came into her mind.

I therefore felt no diminution of my gratitude to the poor old woman, when I learnt that her gift was all in vain, and that it still left me a beggar. Concealing the fact from her, I took counsel of Raymond as to what I must do. I was perfectly helpless; it was my misfortune that I had been brought up to think myself rich, beyond the need of effort, and in fact, above work. After a good

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deal of reflection, Raymond advised me to go to New York, and get a situation as a clerk in a store. This suited my taste better than any other scheme that could be suggested, and I made immediate preparations to depart. I went to take leave of Bill Keeler,

who was now a thriving shoemaker, with a wife and two bright-eyed laughing children. I bade them good-bye, with many tears, and carried with me their kindest wishes.

Having taken leave of all my friends, I set out on my journey to New York on foot, provided with two or three letters of intro-

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duction, furnished by Raymond and his brother, the minister, and with about five dollars in my pocket.

With a heavy and doubting heart I proceeded on my way to New York. My situation was, in every respect gloomy and de-

pressing. I was alone in the world, and utterly unpractised in taking care of myself.

I proceeded on my journey, but the snow was so deep, that at night I had made little progress. The fourth day after my departure, however, just at evening, I entered the city of New York, and took up my lodgings

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at a small tavern in Pearl street. Having taken supper, I went to the bar-room, where about a dozen men were drinking and smoking. One of them, rather genteely dressed, came and sat by me and we fell into conversation. After a little while, he ordered some flip, and we drank it. I felt my heart warmed, and my tongue loosed, and I told the stranger my story. He appeared to take great interest in me and pretty soon proposed to go into another room. Here were two other persons; and we sat down—my new friend ordering more liquor, and introducing me to the strangers. The liquor was brought, and also a pack of cards. In an easy way my companion began to shuffle the pack, and handed them to me to cut, seeming to take it as a matter of course that I would play. I had not the courage to refuse, and drew up to the table. The game went on, and in a very short time I had lost every dollar in my pocket!

"Wit that is bought is worth twice as much as wit that is taught," says the proverb. A father once warned his son against certain evil ways. "Why do you counsel

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me thus?" said the boy. "Because I have tried these things and seen the folly of them;" said the parent. "Well, father," replied the inexperienced youth, "I want to see the folly of them too!"

So it was with me; I had heard the dangers of gambling, but I had not seen and felt the folly of it. But now the lesson of experience had come, and it was deep and bitter. I went to bed with a heavy heart. Sleep came not to my eyelids that long, long night. My fancy was filled with real and imaginary evils. The death of my uncle; the loss of my fortune; the desolation of my condition; my visit to old Sarah's cave; the bitter disappointment connected with the continental notes; my farewell to friends; my launching forth upon the sea of adventure;—all came again and again to mind, each thought with oppressive force and distinctness.

Morning at last came, and with it something like comfort. "I have learnt a lesson," said I, "and will never gamble again." Such was the fruit of my experience, and it was worth all it cost me, for from that time I have kept my resolution. I went to deliver the

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letters wnich had been given me by Raymond and his brother. The persons to whom they were addressed, received me kindly, and one of them, a bookseller, took me into his shop as a clerk, on trial.

It is scarcely possible for any one to conceive of a youth so poorly qualified to be useful, as I was at this time. My education was very imperfect; I had no habits of industry; I was not accustomed to obey others.

The bookseller with whom I was placed, was named Cooke—a large man, with red hair standing out like bristles, and staring, fiery eyes. When he first spoke to me, he was soft as cream in his tones, but I soon learnt that when roused, he was fierce and hot as a volcano. For two or three days he was, indeed, very gentle, and I fancied that I should get along very well. But soon the fair sky was overcast with clouds, and a terrible tempest followed.

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CHAPTER XII.

A MISADVENTURE—THE PRISON—MY RELEASE.

MR. COOKE was a very sharp man in trade, and his whole soul was bent on making money. He cared nothing for books, except for the profit he made upon them. For a few days he left me to myself, but then he began to try to make me as much interested in the business as he was. But this was a vain attempt. My thoughts were always somewhere else, and often when he spoke to me I did not hear him. I was constantly making blunders. In casting accounts I got everything wrong; I credited Mr. Lightfoot with books that should have been charged; I sent off to a customer a copy of Peregrine Pickle, instead of Young's Night Thoughts; and at last, taking the inkstand for the sandbox, I dashed a puddle of ink over the ledger!

This was the crisis of my fate. Never in

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all my days have I seen such another sight as poor Mr. Cooke's face. Astonishment, indignation, fury, were in his countenance all at once. At last he broke out: "What have you done? Oh you unlucky dog! Get out of my house; get out of my sight! Get a piece of blotting paper; fetch some water; run to the house and get a cloth. O dear, dear! what shall I do! O Robert Merry—Robert Merry!" Here the poor man was entirely out of breath. I got the things he wanted, took my hat and walked into the street.

In the excitement of my mind I walked rapidly, and was soon in a remote part of the city. The time passed insensibly away, and it was evening before I was aware of it. As I was walking through a dark and narrow street, I heard voices behind me, and a noise as of many persons running with all their might. The din grew nearer and nearer, and soon I distinguished the cry of "Stop thief! stop thief!" In a moment a young man rushed by me, and at a little distance several men came pressing in hot pursuit. I was seized with a sudden impulse, whether of

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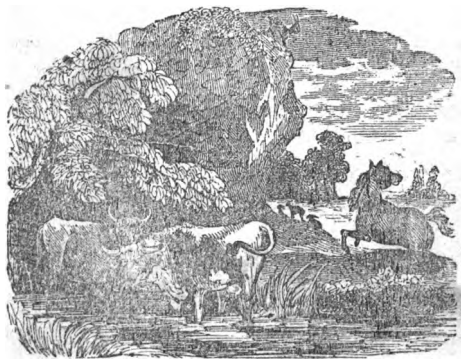
fright, I cannot say, but I ran too with all my might. I was, however, soon overtaken, and rudely seized by the collar by a man, who exclaimed, "Well, rascal, I have got you at last!"

"Let go of me," said I, "I am no rascal."

"Nay, nay," said the other; "not so soon, my boy!" at the same time he twisted



my collar, till I was nearly choked. Two other men came up, and they pulled me rudely along, and at last lodged me in a watch-house. Here I was kept till morning, when I was taken to a prison called Bridewell, where were some fifty persons, of all ages and sexes, and wearing the various as-

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pects of poverty, wretchedness, and crime. I could not endure to face them, so I slunk into a corner and sat down upon the floor. Burying my face in my hands, I gave myself up to despair.

I sat for two or three hours in utter desolation, thinking over my sad fortunes, and cut to the heart with a sense of the evils that surrounded me. At length a man came and told me that I was wanted. I followed him out, and was taken into a room full of people.

I was hurried through the crowd, and placed on an elevated seat, surrounded with a railing, thus becoming the object upon which every eye was bent. The sense of my degradation, innocent as I was, overwhelmed me with confusion. One of the lawyers, called the City Attorney, soon got up and stated to a sour and awful looking man, who it seems was the judge, that I had entered a store the evening of the preceding day, and robbed the place of silver spoons, and money amounting to several dollars; that I was soon pursued, and being speedily overtaken, was lodged in the watch-house for the night, and

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then, in Bridewell. Here several witnesses were called, who testified to these facts. One of them, who had accompanied me to the watch-house, added, that he knew me perfectly well; that I was a thief and gambler by profession; that he had seen me some days before, at a little tavern, notorious as a gambling house, and that he had seen me playing at cards with two celebrated rogues.

I was so utterly confounded at the strange events which had occurred, that I sat still, and heard all with a kind of stupid wonder. I did not attempt to explain or deny anything. It all seemed to me like a conspiracy —the countenances of judge, lawyer, and witness, bore an aspect coinciding with this notion, and I felt it to be in vain to resist. Though the whole story, save only the gambling scene, and my being taken in the street, was false, yet I said nothing, and my silence was taken as an admission of my crime.

This examination was followed by a speech on the part of the lawyer, who evidently wished to have me convicted. I could not imagine why this man, whom I had never

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seen before, whom I never injured or offended, should be so anxious to prove me a thief, and to have me shut up in prison. I did not then know that a lawyer always wishes to succeed in any case he undertakes, right or wrong, because he is thought a better lawyer if he is able to succeed. To be short, I was condemned, and the judge sentenced me to three months' imprisonment in the city jail.

To this place I was taken the next day, and there shut up with about a hundred convicts; thus becoming the regular companion of criminals, and being denied the liberty of going forth to breathe the pure air, or to associate with my fellow-men, because I was considered a dangerous person! At the time, this all seemed to me not only cruel and unjust, but unaccountable. I have since been able to see that it proceeded from weakness of character on my part, owing to my faulty education, and to my abuse of my privileges. My playing at cards at the tavern; my negligence at the bookstore; my want of all habits of taking care of myself,

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had thus led me on from one step to another, till I was now an outcast from society and the world.

I had been brought up to think myself rich; this was the first great evil. I had never had that constant admonition which parents bestow, and which, though children often resist and reject it, is the greatest good that Providence can send to young persons. It was owing to these defects in my education, that I had grown up in ignorance and imbecility; and now that I was left to take care of myself, I found that I was incompetent to the task. Having committed no serious fault, and utterly innocent of all crime, I was yet convicted as a felon.

When I had been in prison about a week, as I was sitting in the large room of the jail, occupied in observing the several persons around me, the door of the prison opened, and a well-known face presented itself to my view; it was that of Bill Keeler! He did not immediately see me, for I was at a distance from him, and there were several persons between us: he, however, looked around,

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evidently seeking some one. I could not doubt that this was myself, and my first impulse was to rush into his arms; but a sense of shame—a feeling of degradation—at being in such a place, withheld me. I therefore kept my seat on the floor, and buried my face between my knees.

I sat in this position for some time, when at last I felt a hand laid on my shoulder, and the familiar voice of Bill, half whispering, said, close to my ear, "Robert—look up—I am here!" I could not resist this but sprang to my feet, and clasped Bill to my bosom. My feeling of shame vanished, my humiliation was forgotten for the moment, and I fully indulged the warm emotions of friendship.

Having talked over a great many things, Bill at length said, "Well, now as to this being in the jail—how do you like it?" The tears came to my eyes—my lip trembled, and I could not speak. "O, do not mind it," said he, "we will get you out, somehow or other."

"Get me out—how is that to be done?" said I.

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"Why, we must first know how you got in," he replied.

"They put me in!" was my answer.

"Yes, yes," said my friend, "but for what?"

I here related the whole story. Bill listened attentively, and after I had done, looked me steadily in the face for a moment. He then clasped his hands firmly together, and said, with deep emotion, "Thank Heaven, you are innocent! I knew it was so." He could say no more—for his breast heaved, and the tears ran down his cheeks. He turned away as if ashamed, and hastily effacing the traces of his emotion, shook me by the hand—said he would see me again soon, and, giving me no opportunity to detain him, went away.

I did not then guess the meaning of this, or conjecture the plan he had in view; but I afterward learned that he went straight to the City Attorney, who had conducted the prosecution against me, and sought an interview. He told the lawyer his errand, and stated that as he knew I was innocent, he hoped I might be released.

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"How do you know he is innocent!" said the lawyer.

"He says he is innocent!" said Bill.

The lawyer smiled—but did not speak.

"You think he is not innocent?" said my friend.

"The question is not whether your friend is innocent; but it is whether you can *prove* him to be so. If you can make the judge believe this, and if you can pay the expenses of the court, and the fees of the lawyers, we can get him out—not otherwise."

This was said in a manner so cold and yet so decisive, as to discourage Bill; so he took his hat and went away. But he did not abandon his project here. After walking about for some time, considering what was to be done, he went to the court-room, with the intention of appealing to the judge.

A young man was before the court, charged with theft. The evidence was clear and conclusive; and his lawyer had therefore advised him to plead guilty; to tell the truth, and throw himself upon the mercy of the judge. He was just about to commence his confession, when Bill's attention was drawn to

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him. He went on to say that he had been for some time connected with a gang of thieves, and proceeded to state some of his exploits. In the course of his narrative he said that, three weeks before, he had stolen some money and other articles from a house, and, being discovered, was pursued; but escaped, as another young man, whom he passed in his flight, was apprehended in his place.

"You say," said the judge, "that another young man was apprehended in your place."—

"Yes, sir!"—said Bill Keeler—who had watched the scene with intense interest—and who had gradually sidled through the crowd, and now stood close to the prisoner—"Yes, sir—another young man was apprehended in his place, and that is Robert Merry, as honest a fellow as ever lived—and you sent him to jail, and he is there now."

"Order—order!" said the constable.

"Who is this fellow?" said the judge.

"It is I, sir," said Bill, nothing daunted. "It is I, sir, Bill Keeler, of Salem. I am a shoemaker, sir and do not know anything

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about law in New York. But, sir, if a man is innocent, we do not put him in prison in our place."

"Hold your tongue!" said the officer.

The prisoner went on with his confession, and all he said tended to confirm the fact, that he was the thief for whose crime I was imprisoned. Bill then again went to the lawyer. As this man had witnessed the scene at the court-room, and of course now understood the mistake by which I had been imprisoned, Bill expected to find him prepared to set about my release.

"You see, sir," said he, "that I was right."

"Right! About what?" said the lawyer.

"Oh, you know well enough—you were at the court to-day, and you heard that fellow tell how it happened that he stole the money and spoons, and left Bob Merry to go to jail for it."

"Well; what is all this to me?"

"Why, are not you a lawyer?"

"Yes."

"Well, is it not the business of a lawyer to see that justice is done?"

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"Not at all; a lawyer has nothing to do with justice."

"Indeed! What is his business then?"

"To serve his client. I am the city lawyer, and the city is my client; it is my duty to try persons charged with offences, and get them committed, if I can. What have I to do with justice?"

"Why," said Bill, scratching his head—"all this bothers me, for I am just come from the country, where we have a notion that law is designed to protect the innocent and punish the guilty: however, I should like to ask one question."

"Certainly," said the lawyer.

"Well," said Bill, casting his eyes knowingly at the attorney—"you got Robert into prison, and you know how to get him out. You were the lawyer of the city to get him into prison—will you be my lawyer to get him out of prison?"

"Of course, if I am paid."

"And what is your fee?"

"Twenty dollars."

"What did you charge for getting Bob into jail?"

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"The same."

"Well, what a strange trade this of yours is! Twenty dollars for a job, whether it is to imprison the innocent, or to release the innocent! It works both ways; twenty dollars for doing wrong, twenty dollars for doing right! twenty dollars for injustice, twenty dollars for justice! But to business. I will pay you what you ask, if you will get Robert out of jail; and here is the money, though it is all the dollars I have got. I wish you would take ten dollars, and let me have the rest to get back to Salem with."

"I cannot take less than twenty."

"Well—then, take it! Now, when will you have Bob out?"

"This afternoon."

Here Bill left the lawyer, who was as good as his word, and that very day I was released from prison.

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CHAPTER XIII.

PLANS AND PROJECTS—MY TWO "FRIENDS" —I SET OUT ON MY TRAVELS.

ALTHOUGH I did not know what was before me, and had no scheme for providing myself with bread even for a single day, I felt an indescribable degree of delight at my liberation from prison. I poured out my gratitude to Bill Keeler as my deliverer. On inquiry, I learned of him that, while at Salem, he had accidentally heard of my imprisonment; and though he supposed me guilty of some misdemeanour, he gathered all the money he could, and immediately pushed off on foot to New York, to obtain my release.

Having talked over the particulars of what had passed, Bill asked me what I intended to do. I told him that I had formed no plan. He then urged me to go back with him to Salem; but as I seemed very reluctant to do so, his mind appeared to be turned to some

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other project. We walked along the street for a considerable distance in silence, and with an uncertain and sauntering gait. My old feeling of dependence on Bill's readiness in discovering ways and means had revived, and my own mind was idle and vacant. I saw that Bill was revolving something, and was evidently in great perplexity. At last his countenance brightened, and turning round on his heel, he led me on, with a decided step, in a direction opposite to that which we had pursued.

"Well, well," said Bill, cheerfully, "when one door shuts, another opens: if the mountain does not come to you, you must go to the mountain. How would you like to become a traveller, Bob?"

"I should like it above all things."

"So I thought—you shall be one, and I will get it all settled for you."

"But how am I to pay the expenses?"

"I brought a couple of friends with me, who will do that for you. You remember old Sarah's cave? well, as I was climbing among the rocks just below it, a few days ago, in search of a woodchuck that had just

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run into his burrow, a large stone gave way under my feet, and down the ledge I went, for more than three rods. A great mass of rubbish came down with me, and it is a kind of miracle that I was not smashed. I was a little stunned, and laid where I fell for a considerable time, but by-and-by I came to myself. There I was, half covered with stones, leaves and gravel. I put out my hand to get up, and I felt something very cold. Well, what do you think it was? It was a rattlesnake, and just by his side lay seven others! It was cold weather, and they were as straight and stiff as bean poles. Well, said I, there is nothing made in vain—so I took two of them, and put them into a handkerchief, and carried them home.

"When I got there, I took them out and laid them on the hearth, and when they got warm they began to move. Well—my wife made a dreadful screaming about it, and little Bob set up his pipes, and the cat stuck up her back, and Jehu barked as if there had been an attack of the Indians!

"Pretty soon after this the two creatures began to stick out their tongues and their eyes

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grew bright. They then put their tails this way and that, and finally rolled themselves into a heap, and set up such a rattling as I never heard before. It was as much as to say—let every man look out for his own shins! Everybody went off—wife, baby, cat and dog—except myself. Taking the snakes in the tongs, one by one, I threw them out of the window into a snow bank, just to keep them cool and civil. I then made a box and put them in, and fitted a pane of glass in the top, so you could look in and see them. Well, I brought the box and the two serpents along with me, thinking that when you got out of prison, they might be of service."

"What do you mean?" said I, in the greatest wonder.

"Mean? why, that you should take this box under your arm, and travel over the world, as independent as a lord. The serpents will be meat, and drink, and clothing, and lodging, and a welcome to boot. I thought it likely when I set out, from what I heard, that you had got into some scrape, and that it might be necessary for you to be scarce in these parts; so I thought the snakes

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would suit your case exactly. I was three days in coming from Salem to New York, and when I arrived I had two dollars more in my pocket than when I set out, and I lived like a prince all the time. And how do you think it was done? When I put up at the tavern at night, I set the box down by my side in the bar-room, and took my fife, and began to play Yankee Doodle, and pretty soon everybody came round me, and then I told them about the serpents, and that they might see them for sixpence each. I got sixpences as thick as nuts in November. Now, you have had a good education, and can make up a good story, and you can travel all over the world, and come home as rich as a Jew. So you may have them, and I shall be happy to think that you are travelling like a gentleman, while I go home to pound my lapstone and take care of my family."

"I thank you a thousand times, my dear Bill," said I; "but I fear this will not do for me. You can turn your hand to anything, but I am a helpless creature, compared with yourself!"

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Bill, however, persisted that I should do well enough when I got my hand in. We spent the night together at the little tavern where he had left his box, and in the morning I concluded to adopt Bill's scheme. He departed, the tears standing in his eyes;—and taking the serpents, strapped across my shoulders, I set out on my adventures.

We left the tavern at the same time, but we had not gone far on our respective roads when Bill came running after me. "I have forgotten a thing or two," said he; "have you got a penknife, if not you shall take mine. A penknife is a really good thing, and no man need feel low spirited when he has got one in his pocket. When I am away from home, and feel at all homesick, I take out my penknife and cut a stick till it turns out a whistle or a walking stick, with a bird's or dog's head, or something of the kind; and all the while I am as contented as a cow stealing turnips. A penknife is a friend in need, and no man should ever be without one. I am glad I have thought to give you mine, and you may keep it for my sake, for I am sure it will never cut our love, even it is as

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sharp as Tim Touchem's scythe, the shadow of which cut off the leg of a man that was passing by. You must take my fife, too, for you can play upon it well, and you will find it make you welcome everywhere."

I was touched with this fresh instance of my friend's thoughtful kindness. I could scarcely thank him for emotion. On this he said: "Come, cheer up, my boy, I am sure you will get on well. If you once get a fair

start, you will be like Seth Follet's eel; you will be sure to go a-head."

"What did Seth Follet's eel do?" said I. "I do not know the story."

"What, did you never hear of Seth Follet's eel? Seth had a little aqueduct made of pieces of timber bored through and joined together, and by means of this he brought the water of a small spring on a hill to his house. After a while the water would

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not run, for some mud got into the pipe. Seth was a strange genius, and he betook himself to a strange plan. He put a live eel into the aqueduct, and the creature went on till it came to the mud. It then wanted to turn round and come back, but the hole was too small, and there was but one thing to be done,—go-a-head; and this was just what Seth wanted. You must do the same." I laughed heartily, and amidst laughing and tears, with a hearty shaking of hands we parted.

I am not going to give a detail of my travels, at present: I am afraid my readers are weary of my long story. I must, therefore, pass lightly over my adventures as a showman; I must say little of my experience as a travelling merchant, and come down to a period several years subsequent to my parting with Bill Keeler, as just related. The war with England, declared by the United States in 1812, was then raging, and circumstances led me to take a part in it, as you shall hear presently. But I will just tell you what became of the snakes.

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Leaving New York with my "two friends," as Bill called them, I proceeded to New Jersey, and thence I travelled to Washington. I was well received wherever I went, and though I did not get rich, still I procured money enough to pay my expenses. I then travelled through the southern states, and in about a year reached New Orleans.

During the expedition, I saw many new things, and acquired a good deal of information. I also met with many curious adventures, of which I may tell you at some other time. Having spent some time at New Orleans, I set my face northward; and proceeding along the banks of the Mississippi, one day, as I was approaching the town of Natchez, in descending a steep bank, I stumbled and fell, and my box was thrown violently to the foot of the hill. The glass at the top of the box was broken, and my travelling companions slid out of their confinement, and brandishing their tongues, and rattling their tails, glided away into a neighbouring thicket. Thus suddenly I took leave of them for ever. It might seem that a

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couple of serpents were not the objects upon which the heart is likely to fix its affection—yet I felt a sort of desolation when they were gone, and calling to mind the friend who had bestowed them upon me, together with my helpless condition, now that they were departed, I sat down by the road-side, and indulged myself in a hearty fit of tears.

CHAPTER XIV

THE INDIAN CHIEF—MY RETURN TO SALEM —CONCLUSION.

In a short time, however, I recovered my spirits, and entered the town of Natchez. I here took passage on board a small sloop, and in five weeks reached St. Louis—a voyage which is now made, in steamboats, in four or five days. Here I found myself nearly out of money—and seeing that it was necessary to do something, I purchased a small stock of beads and other trinkets, and set off on foot to trade with the Indians, of which there were several tribes in that region. My business was to exchange the goods I carried, for furs. In the first trip, I succeeded so well as to try it again, and finally I became a regular fur dealer, and carried on a considerable trade.

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In my excursions I met with many incidents that might be worth telling; but I can only stop to relate one of them. On a certain occasion, I had penetrated into the Indian territory, to a considerable distance from any white man's settlement. Having learned something of the Indian manners and customs, and a few words of their language, I almost felt myself at home among them, particularly as some of the men spoke English. It was not, therefore, a cause of any anxiety, at the time to which I refer, that I was obliged to seek lodging for the night in one of their villages.

It was a beautiful summer night, and I slept alone beneath a hut of skins. About midnight I was awoke by a slight noise, and saw the dark figure of an Indian about to enter the hut. I started in some alarm, but he put out his hand in token of peace, and begged that I would listen to a request which he had to make.

He sat down by my side, and stated that he loved a dark-eyed girl of the tribe, but that she would not return his affection. He was the bravest of the young chiefs in battle, as

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he said: the swiftest of foot in the race; the strongest in wrestling; the most successful in hunting—and yet the maiden, Zary, refused to become his wife. In this condition,

he begged me to give him some charm by which he might conquer the heart of the girl, and persuade her to yield to his suit. I had, among my wares, a pair of ear-rings about

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three inches long, set with glass of various colours—green, red, and yellow. These I gave to the chief, and told him to present them to Zary. He thanked me after his Indian fashion, and went away. I did not know the result at the time, but I learned it at a subsequent period.

At last, the war with England broke out, and the Indians being incited to hostilities against us, there was no farther opportunity to venture among them. I therefore left St. Louis, and after a variety of incidents, reached New York. Here I spent a few days, and then set off for Salem, where I arrived without accident.

At first, the place seemed a good deal altered. Every house was, in fact, precisely as I had left it three years before—but still, all seemed on a smaller scale than I had fancied. The roads and lanes appeared narrower than they had once seemed; the old tavern of the Cock and Bull, was not more than two-thirds as large as I fancied it to be, and the meeting-house seemed to me to have shrunken to one half of its former dimensions. But my

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friends were still the same, at least as to their regard for me.

Raymond was perhaps a little thinner and paler than when I left him; Matt Olmsted seemed unchanged; but as to my oldest friend—Bill Keeler—alas! my heart bled to look at him. When I reached the village, without making myself known at the tavern to a single individual, I walked to Bill's house, which was at a short distance, and standing by itself. As I approached it, I remarked with pain, that it had a shabby, neglected, and desolate appearance. The garden by its side was overgrown with weeds—the fence was broken down in several places. All had an appearance of waste and neglect, as if the proprietor cared not for the place.

I was on the point of turning back, but seeing a child at the door, I went up and spoke to it. It looked me in the face, and I could see, even in the soft features of infancy, the semblance of my friend. I could not help smiling to note in a child the features which were so associated in my own mind with the boyish tricks and youthful frolics of the father. In a few moments the mother

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came to the door, and asked me to walk in. I did so, but she did not recognize me for some time. When I left Salem, she was the picture of ruddy health and light-hearted happiness; she was now thin and pale, and her countenance told of sorrow. Her house was ill furnished, and had a comfortless appearance.

We went on conversing for some time; at last I inquired for her husband, and then she recognized me. Soon after Bill came in. He knew me instantly—but I thought the meeting gave him pain, rather than pleasure. I noticed that he looked poor and shabby, and he seemed to be oppressed with the consciousness of it. However, he soon rallied, and went on talking in his usual way, putting a great many questions to me much faster than I could answer them.

The next day at early dawn, I took my way to the mountain. It was autumn, and the leaves had already fallen from the trees. The chill winds sighed through the branches of the trees that clothed the shaggy cliffs, and seemed to speak of coming winter. There were but few birds, the insects were hushed,

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the flowers had gone down to their tombs. I could not but feel a sort of melancholy, which in some degree prepared me for the scene which followed.

As I approached old Sarah's cave, I saw

her sitting at the door. I went nearer and spoke to her—but she answered me not. I looked again, and perceived that her head was leaning against the rock—her white hair

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hanging loose upon her shoulders. She seemed asleep, and I spoke again—and again. I took hold of her arm to awake her—but she awoke no more. Alone—with no friend at her side—no one to hear her parting words, no one to join in her last prayer—she had departed, and doubtless her spirit had gone to a better world.

I returned to the village and told what I had seen. Some of the inhabitants went to the mountain with me, and we buried the hermitess near the cave which she had chosen as her home. If the reader should ever be passing through the little town of Salem, let him obtain a guide to the mountain, who if he cannot show him the exact site of old Sarah's grave, will still point out the ruins of the cave, and the shelving rock beneath which it was formed.

After remaining a few months at Salem, finding it necessary to engage in some business in order to obtain the means of living, I again went to New York. But business of every kind was greatly depressed, and finding nothing to do, I turned my attention to the seat of war, along the line that divided

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the United States from Canada. Setting out on foot, I soon made my way to Fort Niagara, near the great falls, and afterwards to Cleveland on the southern border of Lake Erie.

About this time, a company of riflemen was raised, to fight chiefly against the Indians, who were very troublesome along the borders of the lake In this I enlisted, and we were soon marched into the quarter where our services were needed. Here we joined a small detachment of American troops, and set out with them to march northward to join the army of General Winchester, then in the vicinity of the river Raizin.

Our route lay through a country consisting alternately of prairies and forests; and as we were passing through one of the latter, we were suddenly attacked by a party of Indians. A smart engagement followed, and several

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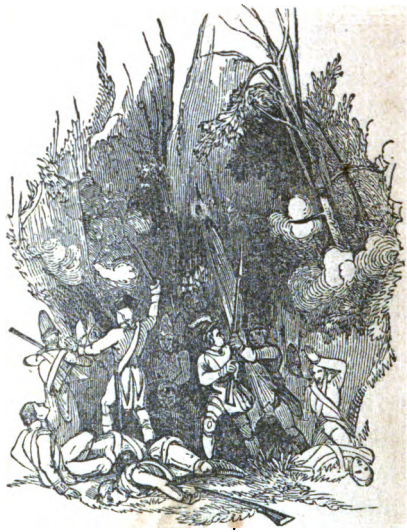
of our party were killed. I was myself wounded in the knee, by a bullet, and falling to the earth, fainted from loss of blood and the anguish of the wound. When I reco-



vered my senses, I was alone, except that one of my dead companions was near me. I attempted to rise, but fell again to the earth.

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At this moment, I saw a tall Indian peering through the woods. He saw me, and with some caution came to the spot. He lifted his scalping-knife over my head, and as my senses faded away, I supposed that my last hour had come.

It was long before I was conscious of existence. When my reason returned, I was on a straw bed in an English block house, where I had been taken by the Indian who found me after I was wounded. It was the

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young chief whom I had supplied with a charm, some years before, by which, as he told me, he was able to win the heart of the beautiful Zary. As he was about to take my scalp, he recognized me, and with a heart full of gratitude, took me to the fort, and caused me to be attended with the utmost care. These things I learned by degrees, for it was several weeks before I was able to listen to the whole story.

When I came fully to myself, I found what I had not before known, that the surgeon of the fort, who had attended me with the greatest care, had amputated my leg, as the only means of saving my life. My recovery was slow, and when at last I was able to rise from my bed, it was with the sad consciousness that I was a cripple for the remainder of my days.

Months passed away, and I was again at Salem. There still swung the sign of the Cock and Bull, and there still flourished the tavern. It had lost indeed its former character; for the greater part of the travelling had been diverted from this route, and instead of being the focal point for numerous

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lines of stage-coaches, it was now the stopping place of only a weekly stage. But the bar-room was as well filled as ever; and when I returned, I found nearly the same set of persons there who had been accustomed to visit it before. A few indeed were missing, and on inquiry I learned that they had gone down to their graves. Their place was however occupied by others, who bore the same general aspect.

The tavern-keeper who succeeded my uncle, followed his example, and shared his fate. He drank liberally, was called a clever fellow, and died early. His successor, so far as I could judge, was walking in his footsteps. Thus flourished the Cock and Bull. My readers may call it a sad place, but no one thought so then. It was esteemed a good tavern, and there were none who seemed to be aware of its deadly influence. It is true that it was a place where men went to get poison which took away their reason, brutified their souls, and destroyed their bodies. It was a school where vice and crime were taught; a place which converted many a kind husband and good father into a ruthless

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savage, and sent down many a person who might have been an ornament to society, to a premature grave. Yet in those days such things were deemed matters of course. Let us be thankful that the deadly influence of the tavern and the grog-shop is now becoming better known and acknowledged.

But poor Bill Keeler—how shall I tell his story! He was naturally a kind-hearted, generous fellow—quick-witted, active and ingenious, but he became the victim of drink. I have not the heart to tell the details of my poor friend's downward steps in the path of ruin. It must be sufficient to say, that when I returned to Salem, I found his widow with a large family, struggling against poverty, but with cheerfulness and success. I had laid up a little money in my various rambles, and as I was able, so it was now the care, as well as the pleasure of my life, to do something, with Heaven's blessing, for the education of these children. In this occupation I forgot my own sorrows, and I became contented; I may say, happy. The children of my old friend have turned out well, and look up to me as a father. One

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of them is settled at Salem as a shoemaker, and by great industry and economy is now possessed of some property. Two of the daughters are in good situations, and all of them are conducting themselves in a way that gives me great satisfaction. From the time that I took up my abode here to the present my life has gone on smoothly. All my real wants are supplied, and I always have a crust to give to him who wants it. Though I have lost a leg, and now feel some of the effects of old age creeping upon me, I have yet much to thank God for, and I trust that my life has not been spent altogether in vain.

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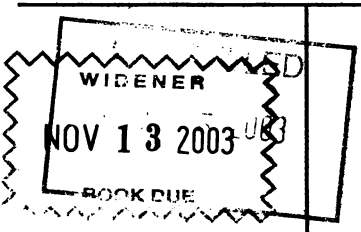

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